

Disability NOW

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the picture

VAT danger

Disabled people could face price hikes of up to 17.5 per cent if plans to introduce VAT on selected products go ahead.

At present, products designed solely for use by disabled people are "zero-rated" for value added tax (VAT). This means that disabled customers, charities and hospitals paying with donated monies do not pay VAT on their purchases. But now firms selling to disabled people have been told by local tax inspectors that VAT must be charged on some of their products.

Martin Fabine, managing director of Onward Designs in Derbyshire, is facing an £8,000 bill after tax inspectors reassessed his product range. The inspectors found that some of his products, including boards which help wheelchair users transfer to cars, are not designed solely for the use of disabled people. Mr Fabine must now increase his prices by 17.5 per cent and pay backdated VAT for the last three years.

"They're trying to suggest that transfer boards can be used by non-disabled people," said Mr Fabine, 43. "But why would they?"

Mr Fabine designed many of his products himself for use by his 16-year-old son Martin, who has cerebral palsy.

"What makes me angry is that things like hospital beds and trolleys are zero-rated, but any Tom, Dick or Harry can use them, not just disabled people."

He has appealed and is waiting for his case to be heard. In the meantime, the price of transfer boards has increased from £40 to £47.

From 20 August, Richard Clarke, managing director of Grinstead Medical in Hampshire, has also been advised to add VAT to a number of his goods. He has asked his specialist manufacturers to write

confirming the goods are solely for use by disabled people.

"Disabled people are not getting the fair deal they are entitled to," said Mr Clark.

A spokesman for Customs and Excise said: "VAT is a broad-based tax and is on most goods and services. The fact that there is some relief for disabled people is unusual rather than the norm."

"These changes, if approved, would have to be across the board," he added.

Nick Pelling, director of the Disabled Living Foundation, the charity which gives advice and information about equipment for disabled people, said: "It would be an absolute disaster for anything to increase prices. There is a statutory authority given by the Government that disabled people should not pay VAT."



Man's best friend: Alan Parton's assistance dog Endal has been voted Dog of the Millennium by readers of a dog magazine. Endal was trained by Canine Partners for Independence (tel: (02392) 450156) to help Alan, from Clanfield near Portsmouth, with shopping, washing machines and even cashpoints.

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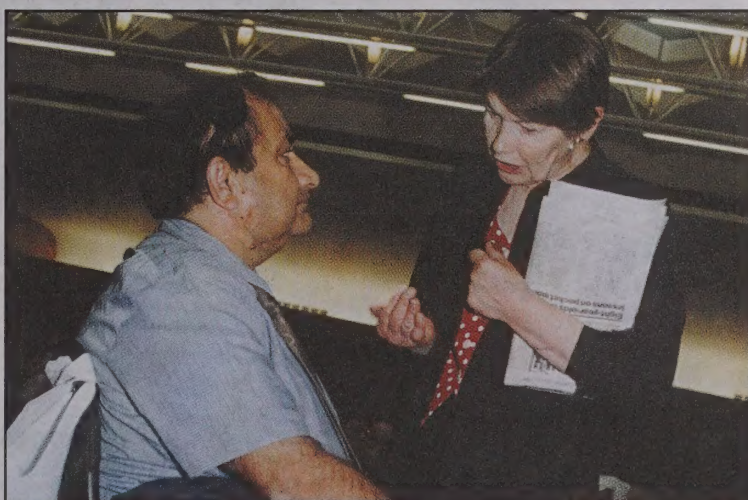
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Capital transport charter



Talking transport: Glenda Jackson with DaRT's Mukesh Patel

Five contenders for the position of London Mayor signed an Accessible Transport Charter calling for better services for disabled people in London.

Tory peer Jeffrey Archer, the former leader of the Greater London Council Ken Livingstone, Labour's Trevor Phillips, Liberal Democrat MP Susan Kramer and Labour MP Glenda Jackson all signed the charter at a launch in London on 10 September.

Organised by Dial-a-Ride and the Taxicard Users' Association (DaRT), the charter calls for better administration and increased resources for door-to-door transport in the capital.

Sean Thompson, director of DaRT, said: "Implementing policies based on the charter will mean that disabled people will get a fair deal from public transport in London."

Health posts

The Government has launched a drive to get more disabled people on the boards of hospitals, health authorities and doctors' practices.

Board members will help make decisions about the way health services are provided in their area. Suitably qualified disabled people will be guaranteed an interview for the paid, part-time posts.

Health Minister John Denham told DN duties might include implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act. "We are reaching out for the first time to disabled people," he said.

Liz Burchett, who has brittle bones, sits on the board for East Sussex Brighton and Hove Health Authority. She said: "We are the voice of the community, challenging decisions and contributing towards policy." *Appointments hotline, tel: 0113-254 6452.*

Cannabis trials soon



Disabled people hoping to take part in trials for the medical use of cannabis could get the drug early in the new year.

Questionnaires were being sent to them as *DN* went to press. *DN* understands that trials on non-disabled volunteers

to test the safety and dosage of the drug have already begun. GW Pharmaceuticals, the company carrying out the trials, will be able to give progress details by the end of the month.

Dr Geoffrey Guy, who is chair and medical director of the company, said: "Every patient who has contacted us through *DN* or other sources

will receive a questionnaire. That is the first step towards assessing which patients go into the study first."

Dr Guy said that patients could either be referred to a consultant taking part in the trial or their own consultant could join it.

"A trial should happen in a hospital near you," he said.

It's official!

More people than ever are now reading *DN*.

Figures from the Audit Bureau of Circulations show that *DN's* circulation is now 22,196. That's a 13.2 per cent increase on last year. Based on the industry-standard assumption that three people see each issue, *DN* is now read by over 66,000 people.

Suicide prompts school call

The family of a hearing impaired teenager who committed suicide is calling for a special school to be set up in its area. Robert Oates, 18, hanged himself in May.

His mother Sheila Oates, from Camborne, Cornwall, and her family are calling for a school for deaf and hearing impaired children.

"He should have been with deaf people. He should have been signing," said Mrs Oates. "If my son had gone to a special school he might not have ended up this way."

Rennie Fry, coordinator of the Cornwall Deaf Association, said: "There are many complex issues surrounding Robert's life. We should look at services and see if we can do better."

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PPA

Care home rules

Elderly people living in England's 17,000 residential homes should have a minimum amount of space in their rooms and know how to complain about standards, the Government has said.

A consultation paper gives a minimum of 10 square metres for a room, or 12 square metres if the occupant is a wheelchair user.

The paper *Fit for the Future?** also says all homes must have a published complaints procedure, and 50 per cent of care staff other than nurses must have qualifications

for the job by 2005. Rules will be enforced by regional Commissions for Care Standards.

The standards are unlikely to be introduced before 2002. Standards are also being developed for Scotland and Wales.

Up to a quarter of private homes and half of local authority homes have rooms smaller than the minimum proposed standard. The National Care Homes Association (NCHA), which represents homes, said that it would demand compensation for its members if the plans went ahead.

Chairman of the NCHA Barry Hartley said: "The apparent intention to cull between 12 per cent and 23 per cent of the sector is alarming."

But Sally Greengross, director general of Age Concern, said: "It is vital that the Government makes these proposals law, so that older people in care homes know they have rights."

The consultation ends on 3 December. Copies of the paper are available free from: Fit for the Future? Room 608, Wellington House, Waterloo Road, London.



Hanging on in there: Winging their way to success in the World Disabled Sailing Championships in Seville, Spain, were (left to right) Ed Suckling, 31, from London, John Long, 56, from Inverness, and John Robertson, 27, from Sunderland. The Subaru UK sponsored boat came seventh in the Sonar class.

Holiday scam

Police are investigating a fraud involving a bogus holiday company suspected of tricking disabled people.

The company, which went by the name of Lake District Learning Disability Group Activity Holidays, distributed thousands of brochures to organisations caring for people with physical and learning disabilities throughout the UK. One organisation lost £3,000.

A spokeswoman from Scotland Yard said: "We are keen to hear from anybody

who has either booked or attempted to book a holiday with the company. The method of fraud is that deposits for the holidays were cashed, but the holidays were not forthcoming," she added.

A spokeswoman for Mencap said: "We hope that police can get to the bottom of this. Preying on vulnerable adults is despicable. We are concerned that many people might have to go without a holiday and have lost money."

Anybody with information should tel: 0171-230 8020.

EU promises

Discriminatory practices against disabled people will have to be taken into account when education grants are made under the European Union's Socrates programme.

New Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs Anna Diamantopoulou has agreed to the principle of non-discrimination being written into the Socrates programme on education.

The commitment was made to Liberal Democrat Euro MP Liz Lynne at pre-selection hearings before the commissioners were elected on 15 September.

Victims of war

Charmian Evans writes
Residents of a war-damaged institution in Kosovo are facing delays in receiving international aid, according to volunteer workers.

The Stimlje Institute in the Kosovan capital Pristina has broken windows, no electricity generator and an intermittent water supply. The 340 residents eat out of tins and are cared for by just 40 staff, only three of whom have medical training.

Stimlje is home to people of all ages with physical impairments, dementia, learning difficulties, mental illness,

and behavioural problems, as well as non-disabled people.

Aid worker John Foreman believes the international community's delay in helping the institute is totally unacceptable: "The physically and mentally disabled are forgotten. They don't make headline news."

The International Committee for the Red Cross has now taken on the management of Stimlje. Merete Taksdal, one of the project leaders, said: "We have been asked to manage Stimlje for a year. After that it depends on the situation in Kosovo."



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What a slog

A disabled woman claims that difficulties in obtaining equipment from Access To Work, the Government's job support scheme, have cost her one job and almost lost her another.

When Munni Rahman of east London started her job at the Disabled Advocacy Network in June 1998, she applied to the Dagenham Employment Service (ES) for the equipment she needed, including a chair and a VDU raiser.

The chair arrived after five months and the other equipment two months later. But Ms Rahman was in so much pain because of working without the equipment that she was forced to resign in February this year.

In March Ms Rahman got a job at Canning Town library. A start date of April 1 was set pending the arrival of Access to Work equipment.

When it had not arrived by the end of June, Newham

council threatened to withdraw the job.

"I feel very angry because now employers think I'm jumping from job to job," said Ms Rahman.

A spokesperson for Newham council said: "We have been in contact with Miss Rahman since February. The problem was the slow movement of the Employment Service."

An ES spokesman said: "We are sorry that Ms Rahman has had cause to make a complaint about the level of service she has received from us, and very much regret any distress or difficulties which she may have suffered as a result."

• Following enquiries made by DN, Ms Rahman's Access to Work equipment has been delivered to Canning Town library and Newham Council has confirmed that the job offer is still open. Ms Rahman wants compensation from the ES before she takes the job.

Tax credit benefits

People claiming Disability Working Allowance will be £2.50 a week better off when it is replaced by the new Disabled Person's Tax Credit (DPTC) on 5 October.

The changes also mean that people coming off Incapacity Benefit and going into work will have six months to claim DPTC rather than two. And a new system to be introduced in October 2000 will give earlier access to the DPTC for people who have been on Statutory Sick Pay or similar payments.

Marilyn Howard of the Disablement Income Group said: "We welcome the changes because it means more money to more people in work."

Trial by train

A rail company has apologised after it took a disabled camper to the wrong destination two years running.

Lee Pay, 28, of Brighton, is angry that he ended up in London Victoria in July after asking for help to get from Brighton to Farnham in Surrey where he was planning to go camping.

Because the same thing had happened last year his mother had stressed to the company that he did not want to end up in the wrong place this year.

But when a computer did not recommend the ideal route for him and staff did not turn up to help him change for his first connection at East Croydon, Mr Pay ended up in London again.

Mr Pay said: "If they are going to offer the service, they should provide it a lot better. I am very independent, but things like this knock me back for years."

Last year Mr Pay was given gift vouchers by the company, but he said he wants to have compensation this time.

He said: "It is no good giving me gift vouchers if I cannot travel."

A spokesman for the train company Connex South Central said: "We apologise and would very much like the chance to prove to Mr Pay that we can provide the service we have offered. We will also look sympathetically at all aspects of his complaint."

Enquiry condemned

A charity has condemned an enquiry which found no evidence of discrimination against children with Down's syndrome at a London hospital.

The independent enquiry into heart surgery at the Royal Brompton Hospital followed allegations about the results of heart operations. It found that results of heart surgery there were usually better than those of other hospitals. It also found no evidence of discrimination against children with Down's syndrome with heart disease at the hospital.

However the enquiry, published in September, recommended that the hospital should set up another review panel to meet the families.

Carol Boys, chief executive of the Down's Syndrome Association, said: "I was very unhappy with the fact that they said they could find no discrimination against Down's children. They did not have the right to say that as they had not contacted the families."

Two consultants, Dr Michael Rigby and Dr Elliot Shinebourne, are named in 16 case studies of concerned parents to be sent to Health Secretary Frank Dobson by the charity.

A spokesman for the hospital said: "We take these views on board and that is why we have set up this second enquiry."



Hot shot: The winning picture in the over-60 amateur category of Help the Aged's national photographic competition was *Chesham Walkers Come Down A Slippery Slope* by Nina Armour, 73, from Buckinghamshire. The competition was held to celebrate the International Year of Older Persons.

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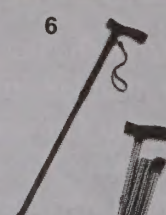
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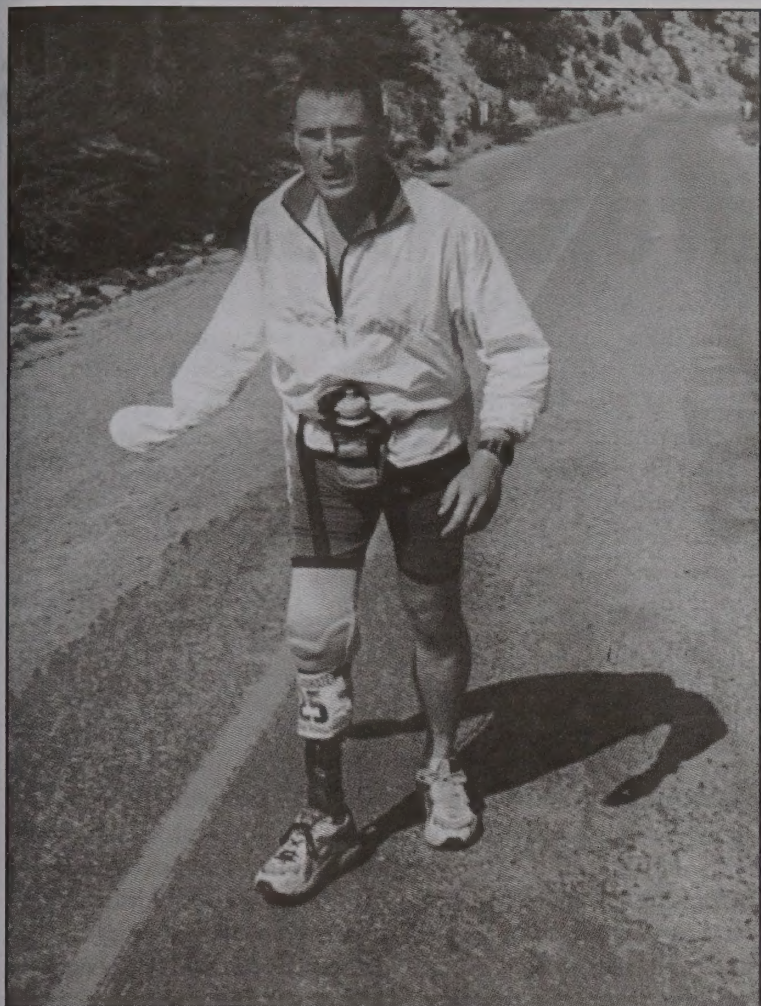
DISCOUNT MOBILITY

In brief

Study guide

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities has launched *Into Higher Education 2000*, a 92-page guide for disabled people wanting to pursue their studies. The booklet features advice and information, profiles of disabled people in higher education, and a list of institutions and advice agencies. It advises people on how to overcome the discrimination, money difficulties and inaccessibility often found in higher education.

£2 to disabled students, trainees and job seekers; £6.50 to others. Tel: 020 7450 0650.



Through the Valley of Death: Ex-army adventurer Chris Moon has completed a 135-mile race across Death Valley in California for Motivation, a charity which helps developing countries produce and distribute wheelchairs. Chris, 37, who lost a leg in a landmine explosion, finished in 53 hours and 48 minutes.

Sex case concerns

A case of a disabled man accused of sexually harassing his carer may have implications for independent living schemes campaigners fear.

Lorna Smith claimed she was sexually harassed by Ian Brown while working as his personal assistant. Ms Smith won her case in a recent judgement which ruled that South Lanarkshire Council was her employer and was liable for damages. The council has lodged an appeal.

Rosemary Frazer, independent living officer at the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, believes the finding could put councils off giving people money to pay for their own personal assistants

under the Community Care (Direct Payments) Act, even though Mr Brown's care was funded by another means.

But Nick Danagher, chair of the Independent Living Committee at the British Council of Disabled People, said the Act was clear that disabled people accepting direct payments would also accept legal liability. He said: "Councils have nothing to fear so long as they provide adequate support services and make disabled people fully aware of their responsibilities as an employer."

Meanwhile, the Government is set to issue new guidance to local authorities on their obligations over direct payments.

Governments to blame

Governments have been blamed for adding to the 600 million disabled people in the world because they fail to deal with preventable diseases or treatable conditions, which could be done at minimal cost.

In a declaration in its Charter for the Third Millennium, adopted in September, the World Assembly of Rehabilitation International (RI) challenges governments to show the political will "to end this affront to humanity". RI is a federation of non-governmental organisations.

The Charter insists on human and civil rights for people with disabilities in the 21st century, warns about the impact of genetic research and calls for policies that respect diversity. It also asks United Nations members to support a UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

The Charter was drawn up by 12 international figures, including Professor Stephen Hawking and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. It was chaired by Lord Morris.

Poster regrets

Disabled actor Mat Fraser has said he regrets being part of a controversial Government poster campaign, amid revelations that he was shunned by disability arts organisers.

Fraser appeared in a poster as part of the "See the Person" campaign, which disability campaigners have condemned for ignoring the need for civil rights legislation. He said: "I do not think a poster campaign is appropriate when we still have not got enforceable legislation protecting our rights."

Meanwhile, it has emerged that organisers of the Independence Festival, a

national disability arts show, had planned to ask Fraser not to appear. The event, held in Manchester in July and partly funded by the city council, included a stall for the British Council of Disabled People which has attacked the Government campaign.

Natalie Markham, an Independence Festival Committee member, said: "We decided we could not have conflicting messages put out. It was about being consistent with the aims of the festival, which is about promoting the independence of disabled people and the social model of disability. Clearly the campaign does not do either of those

things. I do not think it was censorship."

In the end Fraser called to say he could not make it because he was in America.

Former theatre director and disability arts consultant, Paddy Masfield, said: "I am very much opposed to censorship of any form. But I think that it is inevitable that people have very strong views."

The Government said it was introducing enforceable civil rights and highlighted the Disability Rights Commission due to start work in April 2000.

See also page 16 for letters sent in to the editor on this subject.

Holiday from hell

A disabled man is furious after a hotel manager said he should not be in a "normal" hotel and took him to a residential centre instead.

Bill Smith, 56 of Milton Keynes, who has cerebral palsy, was visiting friends in Torquay, Devon, and booked into the Lindum Hotel early last month.

But the day after he arrived he said he would prefer a room which had a bath with handles rather than a shower.

After telling Mr Smith he could not cope with him, hotel

manager Chris Owen drove him to a retirement home. Friends of Mr Smith had suggested the centre, but he decided to return home.

Mr Smith said: "I feel demoralised. It has dented my confidence."

Mr Owen told DN he did not think Mr Smith would be safe in a shower and he did not have a room with a bath with handles available. He also said he did not have enough staff for them to help Mr Smith make a cup of tea in his room.

"My opinion was that he is not able to stay in an ordinary hotel like ours," he said.

And he added that, while disabled people had stayed in the hotel in the past, he feared other guests might be put off.

"Guests do not complain about disabled people. All they do is walk away from it or shield their eyes," he said.

Jane Enticott, campaigns manager at Scope, said: "This kind of incident just shows the importance of anti-discrimination legislation."

In brief

NIF news

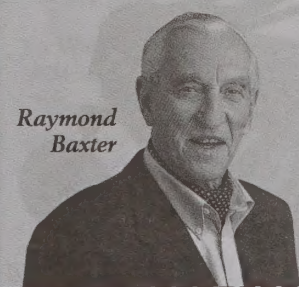
How to manage when your partner has a stroke and information is sparse and inappropriate is a first-person story in the latest issue of *Innovations in Information**, published by the National Information Forum (NIF) for information providers. Also covered is the information Asian parents really want and the winners of NIF's Getting the Message Across Awards.

*£12 a year for three issues, £4 for the audio cassette, tel: 0171-402 6681.

Sign quota

The British Deaf Association has welcomed a new set of Independent Television Commission rules which mean digital terrestrial TV channels will have to provide sign language on five per cent of their programmes. The quota will be introduced in several stages from November 1999.

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DN gives a round-up of some of the disability stories that appeared in the media earlier in the month



Get set, go! Liane Threlkeld (right) and Clare Ward (left) were among guests at this summer's sports day at Crabhill House respite care centre near Redhill in Surrey. Part of a Youth Fortnight arranged by the Winged Fellowship Trust, the day was sponsored by local energy company SEEBOARD.

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In brief

TV licence deal

Blind people should get half-price TV licences, according to a report on the future of BBC funding by watchdog Gavyn Davies. The findings will be considered by a parliamentary committee in November.

Stabbing sentence

A woman who stabbed her learning disabled son's attacker in the back has been jailed for four years. Jessie McCutcheon, 43, from London, plunged a 12-inch knife into 16-year-old Jamie Peters as he held 17-year-old Alan in a headlock.

Carer awards

Carers will be able to nominate an organisation or individual that has given them exceptional help, as part of the Caring for Carers Awards organised by the Department of Health and three charities.

The awards are designed to reward good practice and encourage improvements in services to carers. Nominations must be submitted by 30 November.

Tel: 0171-828 8822.

Mencap guide

Mencap has launched a new booklet and video on best practice in providing support to people with learning disabilities. *What's Good Support?* gives information about what supporters do, how they work and what skills they require. It is the result of a year-long project involving learning disability groups and Mencap. £19.95, tel: 0171-696 5589.

Remploy – jobs are still safe

Disabled workers' jobs are safe despite plans to merge a number of Remploy factories, the Government says.

Disability Minister Margaret Hodge said in September that the reorganisation of factories in Wales, Staffordshire, Yorkshire and the North East would result in "no compulsory redundancies". Ms Hodge said staff would be retrained to take up jobs in unaffected Remploy factories or in mainstream companies, and would be reimbursed for extra costs incurred.

Ms Hodge said: "It is a patronising legacy of post-war Britain to believe that disabled people can only work in segregated factories. We are giving an additional £10m to ensure Remploy can change the way it provides opportunities."

"Remploy's total disabled workforce will rise by 1,000 to 11,000 over the next three years," she added.

Tony Withey, chief executive at Remploy, told DN that

natural wastage would be used for all job losses that resulted from the mergers. He said nine factories would merge, but at least two new sites would be gained. Remploy loses around 700 people through natural wastage every year, he added, and this would more than absorb the effect of the reorganisation.

Bert Massie, director of the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR), said: "Getting disabled people into mainstream work is vital. However, those who require the additional support of sheltered employment must continue to have that option."

• The Government is inviting comments on a consultation document, *The Supported Employment Programme – A Consultation on Future Development*, which proposes greater integrated employment prospects for disabled people. For a copy, tel: 0114-259 6964.

Let my wife die

A Shropshire man is seeking a precedent-setting High Court order to allow his wife to die.

Neil Lane's wife Lorraine, 42, who is in a near-coma, has been kept alive by a drip for the last six months after a stroke. Mr Lane believes his wife would want to be allowed to die and would like food and water to be withheld.

Since the landmark case of Tony Bland, who went into a coma after the Hillsborough football stadium disaster, it has been legal to withhold sustenance from patients in a persistent vegetative state. However, the brain activity detected in Mrs Lane means she is defined as being in a minimally conscious state (MCS). If the case is

successful, it would set a precedent for euthanasia in MCS patients.

A spokesperson from the Voluntary Euthanasia Society said: "If Mrs Lane had made a living will, it would be unnecessary to go to court. This is an area that does need to be clarified."

• A man who tried to end his grandmother's suffering by switching off her life support machines has walked free from the Old Bailey. Shara Karapetian, 23, from west London, switched off machines and cut a drug supply tube. He was sentenced to 18 months, suspended for two years. His grandmother recovered and was discharged from hospital.

Coma woman left

A diabetic woman who went into a hypoglycaemic coma on a crowded commuter train in August was only discovered four hours later when the train was shunted into a siding.

Cleaners found Susan Kelly, a tax specialist from Essex, late in the evening, on a train that had left London's Liverpool Street station at 5.44pm.

A spokesperson for train operators Great Eastern said: "It shouldn't have happened,

because the driver usually walks from one end of the train to the other at the end of the line. It was a very busy train and that's the only explanation we can find for this."

A spokesperson from the British Diabetic Association said: "Some people have warning signs of impending hypoglycaemia but in other cases it can look as if the person has fallen asleep. There is a general lack of awareness about diabetes."

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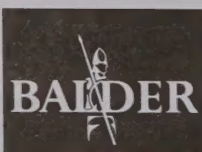
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On the ball: Chelsea Disabled Football Club passed on a few tips to young footballers, including (left to right) David Llewellyn, Christopher Foster and Mark Corens at the Bank of England's sports ground in Roehampton in September. The event was organised by the Limbless Association.

LIMBLESS ASSOCIATION

No bath for a year

Disabled and elderly people are waiting for up to two years for local authorities to adapt their homes, according to a report from the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) and Age Concern.

The report* found that a third of local authorities are breaking the law by not processing applications within six months. Two-thirds have little or no priority system for cases.

Kate Ashworth, 12, from Stockport, has not had a bath for 13 months because of delays in building an accessible bathroom extension on her home.

Carers have been unable legally to bath Kate, who has cerebral palsy, since she and her grandmother Pat Ayres moved into the area to be near relatives in July last year. Mrs

Ayres, who cannot lift Kate because she has had a heart attack, claims her request for an assessment of the building was turned down before she bought it. She then found the bathroom was unsuitable and applied to the local authority in August 1998 for an extension. This was granted, but 13 months later building has still not commenced.

"For a little girl not to have a bath for that long is disgusting," said Mrs Ayres.

Stockport Council said the delay was due to funding. The £24,000 cost of the extension is £4,000 more than the Government allows local authorities to spend on housing adaptations. The Government's Family Fund Trust has been approached for the shortfall.

A spokesperson for Stockport Council said: "The ceiling of £20,000 on these extensions is something the council has long protested about. We have applied to the Family Fund, but, despite chasing them, are still waiting to hear back."

The spokesperson also said the council had no record of a request for an assessment of the property prior to purchase.

A spokesman for the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions said: "That is the sum allocated and there are other places in which local authorities can make up the difference."

* Disabled Facilities Grants – is the system working?, free from RADAR, tel: 0171-250 3222.

Too old for implant

A 64-year-old woman lost her fourth appeal against a decision not to grant her a cochlear implant in September.

West Hertfordshire Health Authority rejected Pam Manning from Bovingdon, West Hertfordshire, on several grounds, including the fact that priority is given to young children.

A spokesperson for the health authority said: "The decision was made after careful

consideration of a number of factors, including the many competing needs of people applying for treatment. Priority is given to young children who are still developing language skills."

Mrs Manning has decided to appeal again.

Cochlear implants cost an estimated £35,000 each. Access to them is dependent upon individual health authority policies.

MMR court case in sight

The parents of children with disorders including autism are taking vaccine manufacturers to court.

Discussions between lawyers representing more than 500 children and pharmaceutical firms including SmithKline Beecham and Pasteur-Merieux began at a case management conference in London in September. The parents are claiming their children's immune systems were damaged by the measles, mumps and

rubella (MMR) vaccination and are demanding compensation.

In a seemingly contradictory move, expert witnesses for the prosecution will include Dr Ken Aitken, who was a member of an independent Medical Research Council report body that found no links between the vaccine and autism or the bowel disorder Crohn's disease.

The case is thought to be the largest multi-party action ever. Nearly 2,000 enquiries have

been received and 552 legal aid certificates already granted to parents wishing to prosecute. Solicitor prosecuting the case Ann Alexander, of Alexander Harris, says enquiries are still welcome from anyone who feels their child may have been affected by the vaccine.

"We're delighted that things are moving ahead," said Ms Alexander.

For details call freephone, tel: (08080) 774477 or visit www.alexharris.co.uk

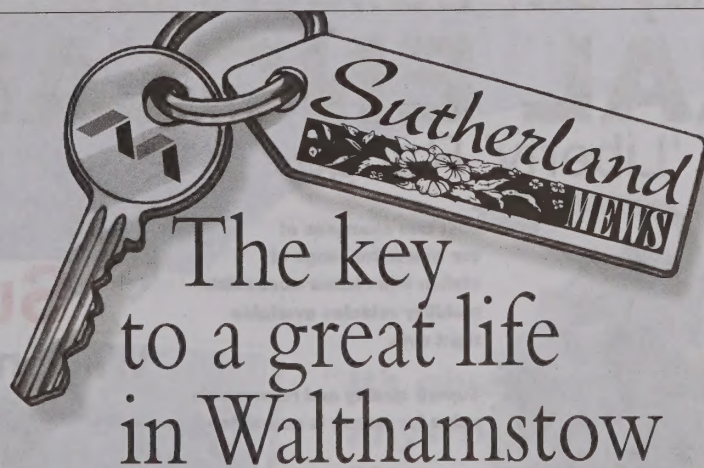
Missing out on millions

Thousands of people miss out on money that is rightfully theirs because of a lack of access to independent advice. This claim came in the 60th anniversary annual report* of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (NACAB), which says that debt and discrimination are growing problems for many people.

Another NACAB report, *A Balancing Act**, highlights the increasing insecurity of daily life. Disabled people, for example, are often worried about benefits and such concerns can lead to serious mental health problems, the report says.

* Tel: 0171-833 2181. See page 27 for feature on debt.

The Government has still not announced the chair of the Disability Rights Commission, so no profile this month.



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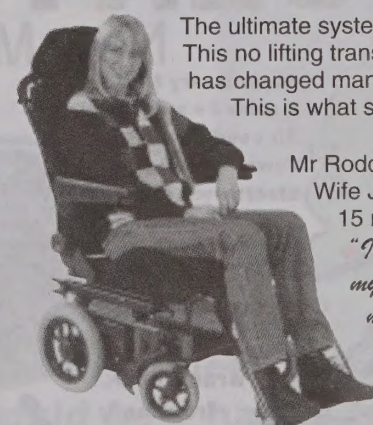


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Mr Wilkinson - Staffordshire.
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Drug study gives heart

Ramipril, a drug already used to treat high blood pressure, can reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes among those who have already had them, researchers have found.

In an international study of people who had had vascular problems such as heart attacks and strokes, research found the drug caused a 25 per cent overall reduction in the risk of the problem

recurring or a related vascular problem surfacing. The study looked at 9,500 people in 19 countries.

The best result was in the prevention of further strokes in people who had already had one, said Dr John Kennedy of the Western Infirmary in Glasgow, who coordinated the UK part of the study.

"If they had another stroke, it was milder. So, not only was

the incidence of strokes reduced, but the severity was also reduced," he said.

Around 200,000 people have heart attacks each year in the UK, so there could be 50,000 fewer instances of repeated attacks or other vascular problems, Dr Kennedy added.

"That is a very large number of people we are talking about," he said.

Ask about asthma

The Government should ensure that people with asthma are asked three specific questions whenever they visit doctors, a national charity and a doctors' organisation have said.

The National Asthma Campaign (NAC) and the Royal College of Physicians want people with asthma to be asked whether the condition has caused sleep problems, whether they have symptoms during the day and whether asthma has affected them at school or work. They hope the questions will ensure that

better care is provided for asthma patients.

Dr Martyn Partridge, the NAC's chief medical advisor, said: "The three questions may seem obvious, but they get to the heart of the experiences of all people who live with asthma. They will enable doctors and nurses to understand the impact asthma is having on the life of their asthma patient better and to monitor the care that is provided."

Asthma costs the National Health Service £672m a year and causes 85,000 hospital admissions.

Get a head

An American scientist has revealed plans to transplant human heads to new bodies.

The first people to benefit could be those paralysed from the neck down, whose life can be shortened by organ failure.

The transplant might allow a normal lifespan, although patients would stay paralysed because there is still no way to reconnect the spinal cord.

The Ohio team is led by Robert J White, who has transplanted monkey heads.

The team has already carried out the operation on human corpses.



Oh, you beautiful doll: makers of prosthetics at Duke University, North Carolina, are using the knees from Barbie dolls to make knuckle joints in prosthetic fingers.

Autism hormone trial

British researchers hope to trial a drug on autistic children after reports from America that 70 per cent of parents thought it helped their child.

A Manchester team wants to carry out research with 200 children using the naturally occurring hormone secretin.

Stephen Dealler, who will be involved in the research, warned that another study had found that secretin had no effect. But he added: "I think we have enough information to show that some children do respond."

A spokesman for the National Autistic Society said: "We need controlled trials with a wide range of children before we say that secretin would help all children with autism."

• A discussion on autism will be the first ever worldwide disability conference to be held on the internet. Autism99 will take place 2-19 November on www.autism99.org. It will allow parents, carers and professionals to contact each other. Around 100,000 people are expected to take part.

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Epilepsy drug advice

People taking epilepsy drugs who are concerned about possible side effects should contact their GP, according to Britain's leading epilepsy organisation.

The advice from the British Epilepsy Association (BEA) comes in the wake of the recent, much-publicised case of 31-

year-old Nick Pierce from Chester. He had been taking Epilim for most of his life after being diagnosed with epilepsy as a child. He was also thought to have learning difficulties.

However, when Mr Pierce's medication was changed, his mental and physical disabilities began to disappear.

A spokesperson for the BEA said: "This case is very unusual. Sodium Valproate (the generic version of Epilim) is one of the most commonly prescribed epilepsy drugs and causes no adverse side effects for most people."

BEA freephone helpline, tel: 0808-800 50505.

Dome designs: The AQUABAC watersports postural support for people with spinal injuries has been chosen by the Design Council as one product to appear in the Millennium Dome. Other products that have been selected include PCD Maltron's Ergonomic computer keyboard and the CINetracker film audio description system.

Fuel worry

Disabled and elderly people need more help with paying their fuel bills, the Consumers' Association (CA) has said.

In a new report, *Final Demand**, the CA said more than one in five households or 10m people are in debt over gas or electricity payments. And 1.5 million people went without gas or electricity last year because they could not afford to feed prepayment meters.

Adam Scorer, senior public affairs officer at the CA, said: "Disabled people are more likely to live on low incomes and are more likely to be 'fuel poor'. We need solutions that will take them out of fuel poverty."

The association said the Government should force companies to improve the way they deal with people facing fuel debt and develop a national strategy to improve energy efficiency in homes.

A spokeswoman for Age Concern said: "Older people are afraid of getting into debt. They are less likely to claim the benefits they are entitled to and are less likely to put the heat up the extra notch that might make a difference. We need to make sure that people are warm."

*Available only to subscribers of Which? magazine, tel: 0171-830 6000.

Premium cut

Specialist insurer Travelbility has cut premiums by almost 50 per cent for disabled people travelling with another person.

The premium for an unlimited number of trips abroad over 12 months for a couple is now £155. This is in line with some other companies' premiums for non-disabled travellers.

Travelbility, tel: 0500-525 550.



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Bowling battlers

Silver medals were decided on shots when three teams tied for third place at the CP Sport National Pairs Indoor Bowls Championships, 4-5 September, in Nottingham.

Gold medallists Richard Guy from Loughborough and Dennis Porter from Hull won the event with eight points. The pair have been playing together for many years and won the event last year.

Michael Martin from Middlesbrough and Les Aksuik from Manchester were awarded second place on shots.

For more information about CP indoor bowls, tel: (01159) 401202.

• Bowlers from 12 branches of Scottish Disability Sport took part in the Royal Mail Scottish Lawn Bowls Championships for disabled people in Aberdeen on 4 September.

Jessie Buchan from Inverness, who is visually impaired, won the Sandy Fraser Memorial Trophy, while the former Paralympic bowler David Heddle won the men's ambulant title.



Bowled over: David Heddle at the Royal Mail championships

Water ski wow

British water skiers won silver in the Ford World Disabled Water Ski Championships at Heron Lake in Wraysbury at the end of August.

Almost eighty world-class athletes from 15 countries took part in the event hosted by the National Development Centre of the British Disabled Water Ski Association (BDWSA). Britain came second overall to the USA but landed itself a total of 12 gold medals and five new world records.

Britons Alan Pettigrew and Adeline Fahey, both wheelchair users, received overall golds in their categories, while Mike Appleford from Glasgow won bronze in his first ever world championships.

Categories included slalom, wake slalom, trick and jump.

Gwyneth Wright of the BDWSA said: "The opening ceremony and individual medal presentations were really emotional, but, while competition was intense, the atmosphere was one of a family party."

For more information about water skiing with the BDWSA, tel: (01784) 483664. See also pages 20 and 21 for our Autumn Outings feature on water skiing.

Brit sailors second in Spain

A tiebreaker pushed Britain into second place behind the German boat in the Sonar class of the World Disabled Sailing Championships in Seville, Spain, 3-9 September.

Competing against 23 boats from 15 countries, the British boat was crewed by Andy Cassell, Andrew Millband and Brian Harding. A second

British boat finished seventh in the competition.

In the "single handers" 2.4s class (2.4 metre boats), Britain's Mike Browne from Middlesex came fourth behind Germany, Denmark and France. Other Brits were 10th, 11th and 14th out of 27 boats in total.

The World Championships will not take place next

year because of the Sydney Paralympics. Selections for the British Paralympic sailing team have yet to be announced.

For details of disabled racing sailing, call British team coach Cathy Foster, tel: (01590) 682007.

For general disabled sailing information, call Sailability, tel: (01703) 627400.

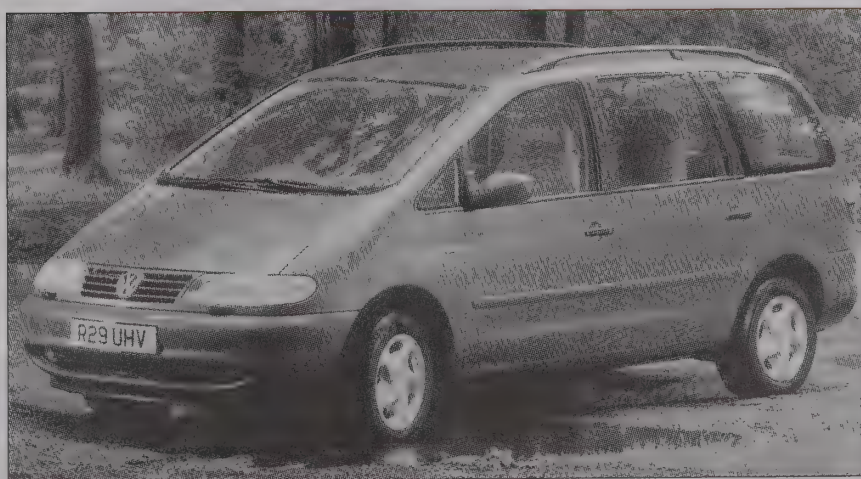
In brief

Cricket champs

Lancashire won in the final against Warwickshire at the first English Cricket Board Disability County Competition Final on 8 September. Ten counties took part in the event, with all team members having either physical disabilities or learning difficulties.

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Information is available from the Disability Discrimination Act Helpline. Call 0345 622 633 to find out more.

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See the person

Richard Branson has it, but he is one of the richest men in the world. Guy Ritchie has it, too, but it did not stop him from making the film *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*.

People with dyslexia can be very successful and creative and that will be the focus of Dyslexia Awareness Week, organised by the British Dyslexia Association (BDA), starting 1 November.

Mark Wilkinson of Bromham, Wiltshire, is another high achiever. He heads his own furniture company, Mark



Mark Wilkinson: success now, but school was difficult

Wilkinson Furniture, and reckons he is the top kitchen designer in the country.

His dyslexia helps him in designing furniture because he can see and alter shapes in three dimensions. And it helps him to be innovative, he says: "Because dyslexia affects my memory I never have the comfort of being able to fall back on old ideas."

But Mark had it tough at school, where his dyslexia went undiagnosed.

"School was humiliating," he said. "I was assumed to be some form of congenital idiot and treated as such."

It was only three years ago that he found he had an IQ of over 156 and he is now a member of MENSA (the international organisation whose members must have an IQ of over 148).

School can still be a hard time for dyslexic children – especially in state schools it would seem.

In a new survey of 756 parents published by the Dyslexia Institute, which does assessments and helps people get round dyslexia, 60 per cent of those whose child attended a state school thought their son or daughter did not get sufficient help. This figure compared with 28 per cent for private schools.

And in state schools parents often struggle to get their child assessed for dyslexia in the first place.

Amanda Cornish is a specialist dyslexia tutor at the private Dulwich College Preparatory School, south

London, but taught for 23 years in a state school. She says there is such deprivation in inner-city state schools that dyslexic children's needs can be overlooked because so many other children have special needs.

"At the school where I teach the boys are screened all the time and parents have to pay the school extra for one-to-one lessons. In your average state primary school when teachers are screening children, the word dyslexia may not come into their minds. A teacher may assume parents are not reading to a child who has literacy problems."

But a spokesman for the Department for Education and Employment says the Government supports early assessments: "If parents are dissatisfied with a school's response to their concerns they have a legal right to ask a local education authority (LEA) direct to make an assessment. If

Starting blocks

This year Dyslexia Awareness Week focuses on successes and creativity. But, as Rod Hermeston finds out, schools do not always give dyslexic children a chance to shine

the LEA refuses, they can appeal."

Meanwhile, the BDA has produced a new pack, *Achieving Dyslexia Friendly Schools*, which gives guidance to teachers.

Carol Orton, policy and information manager at the BDA, says: "With the dyslexia awareness campaign we are trying to alert people to the fact that a dyslexic child need not be afraid to go back to school after holidays, and many are."

Teaching methods which involve all the senses can help overcome mild dyslexia, she says, and identify more severely

Assessment struggle



Adam George, ten, from Hull is still at primary school.

His mother Ros says: "He was not picking things like the alphabet up. The school seemed to think that he was not a very confident child and was perhaps a bit lazy. I was told to accept that I did not have a very intelligent child."

The school had an assessment done, but Mrs George disagreed with it. And after a further assessment by Hull University Adam now goes to the Dyslexia Institute where he is given reading and spelling exercises.

dyslexic youngsters who might need specialist tuition.

But even when a child's needs have been identified, parents can remain frustrated, according to the BDA. Some complain that schools do not provide the help that is needed even when their child's needs have been assessed.

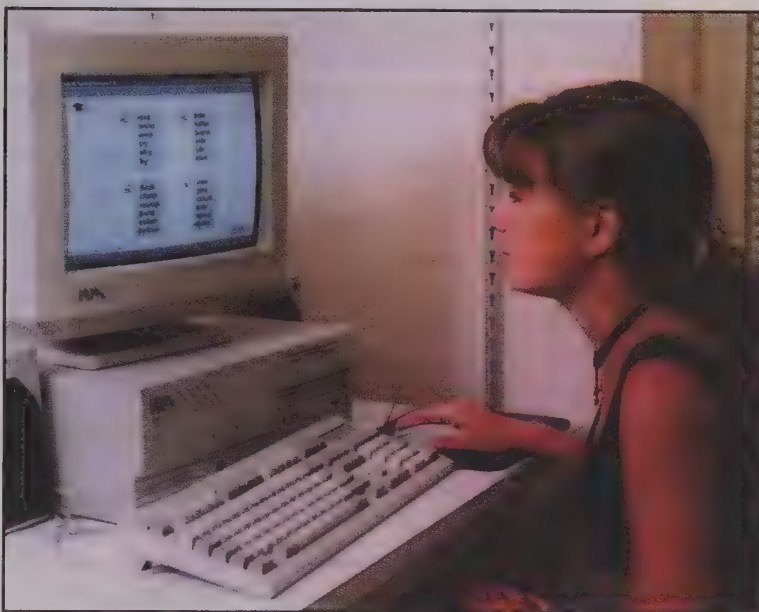
It is also difficult for people who have dyslexia to know how well a university can provide for them. That is why the National Working Party on Dyslexia in Higher Education is cooperating with universities to develop a grading system. This will allow universities to show how well they meet dyslexic students' needs in the disability statements they publish. The system could be in

operation next year.

"Sometimes universities might just say they support dyslexic students," says Dr Chris Singleton, chair of the group. "That could mean they have anything from a computer to a fully-fledged support system. This way universities can grade themselves."

It may be true that dyslexic people can scale the heights, despite everything. But not everybody can be Richard Branson. Educational support is vital for a good start in life, and it seems such support is often lacking.

The Dyslexia Institute, tel: (01784) 463851. British Dyslexia Association, tel: 0118-966 8271.



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'I accept myself with pride'

Wheelchair user Penny Boot is tired of battling with the sexual prejudices and voyeurism of non-disabled people

From my first adolescent crush to my more recent flurries in a torrid pool of love and sex, I have always known that it is my right to be, and feel, sexy.

I'm not sure how I was able to rise above successive environments that did little but suppress and stifle nervous

"I have always known that it is my right to be, and feel, sexy"

sexual awareness. Disabled friends – particularly older girls – were often role models; I was always attracted to the mavericks and eccentrics among my peers as the ones who push us on to live and experience in ways we may not have done otherwise. Knowing I could have sexual feelings, even when in physical or emotional pain, was ultimately liberating. It has eventually helped me get to a point where I feel okay about myself.

Yet, of course, there is still a battle. Disabled people fight



Penny Boot and fiancé Gabriel

GRAHAM TURNER

against so many prejudices, and a good question might be: "Why all this fuss about sex?" The problem is that, one way or another, it often defines who we are. To choose to be celibate is one thing; to accept it unwillingly and in silent frustration through constraining circumstance is

very much another.

I feel that we need to cultivate sexual education; we must make up our own rules of communication, express the patterns of our own desire. After all, do we want to compete with outdated mainstream ideas of sexuality? Ideas that may be exploitative to women? Notions that are plainly homophobic? Sex does not have to be straightforward copulation; at its best, it is

wonderful intimacy, tenderness and passion. To express a sexual identity is to make clear choices. To be sexual means we have to think about ourselves.

Often it has been said to me that I am an exception. Apparently I do things – like posing naked as an artist's model – that disabled friends

and acquaintances tell me they could never do.

The one thing I know I have done is that I have dared to explore myself. This has been through the chastising fire of

"Disabled people are still battling against the revulsion of the non-disabled"

real experience, and also through counselling. I have many cobwebs from a bleak and abusive past. These issues needed to be tackled (and still do) for me to feel relaxed enough to be loving and sexual in my real life. Over the years, I've discovered my social skills and I have a very clear idea of my appearance and style. More importantly, perhaps, I've come to accept myself with pride and without judgement. I am most happy wearing my "uniform" of difference – I'll be a punky-hippy type into my dotage.

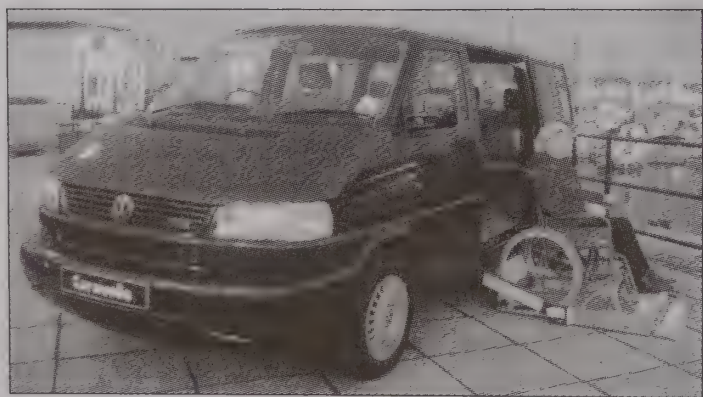
During my shy teenage years attempts were made to "normalise" me. Surgery and

drugs, the doctors hoped, would fix my "deformed" body. Drab clothes would deal with my quiet rebelliousness, so various social work folk believed. I didn't have the skills to challenge this oppression. I was without a clear identity and had little space to experiment and find out who I was, and how I would express myself to the world. The process of self-discovery was slow.

In August I featured in a Channel 4 documentary about sexuality. It exasperates me to feel that I am still banging the same old drum. Disabled people still battle against the revulsion of the non-disabled. We are still confronted with voyeuristic curiosity. We are seldom accepted sexually unless we yell and create a fuss.

But the issues must also be confronted in ourselves. We have to like who we are if we are to be strong enough to tackle prejudices that touch on mainstream insecurities about sex and body image. In creating our own pride, we might just make everybody take note and think.

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Looking for work that's local, has flexible hours and gives you a chance for promotion? Then a supermarket job could be the answer, says Sally Brown

Supermarket sweep



In the bag: Anna Risveglia at the checkout



Soccer star: Edward Black with Asda colleagues

ACKRILL NEWSPAPERS

Apart from a sore neck from twisting to reach the conveyor belt (a common checkout complaint!), Anna has had no problems in her job. The store is fully accessible and there is an accessible staff toilet.

"Sometimes when customers see me away from the till they say: 'Oh, I didn't know you were a wheelchair user.' I think: 'Why should you?' But that's not really a problem," she says.

Relief butchery manager for the Co-operative Wholesale

Society (CWS) in Scotland, Andy Macdonald has been in supermarkets all his working life. According to Andy, 34, who



Andy Macdonald

is profoundly deaf in both ears, supermarkets offer excellent employment prospects.

"I can honestly say that supermarkets are first-class employers of disabled people," he says. "Management spotted my talent, not my disability, and swiftly promoted me to butchery manager."

Andy, from Ayrshire, has found his employers to be adaptable: "Any problems you have are overcome with help. For example, it's important for

my supervisor to keep in touch, so I was issued with a vibrating pager."

Edward Black has worked as a bag packer at Asda in Harrogate, North Yorkshire, for almost six years. Edward, 25, who has learning difficulties, tried various jobs in the store but likes bag packing best.

Packing jobs are not always available at Asda stores, but Edward got his after a brief interview arranged by the Shaw Trust, a charity which supports disabled people in employment. Edward's responsibilities include packing shopping bags and taking them to customers' cars.

"I enjoy working here," says Edward. "It's good to have a job and I like talking to people. I can also save for my holidays."

Edward recently went on holiday to the Canary Islands and has just got back from Switzerland, where he played as part of a special needs football team representing Britain.

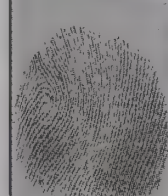
Supermarkets are clearly a good source of work for some disabled people. So don't look on your next shopping trip as a chore – look on it as a chance to see a place that could soon be providing you with income and experience.

Shaw Trust, tel: (01225) 7163650.

Company policies

- CWS: "Disabled people can apply for any job and we will always do our best to accommodate their practical needs."
- Asda: "Our aim is that no job applicant is less favourably treated on any grounds. If a disabled person applies for a job, we will consider them. We look for people who are smiley, friendly and confident with people."
- Tesco: "Tesco looks for ability NOT disability when recruiting. Disabled people can apply for any job, although it is possible that some jobs will not be suitable for people with certain disabilities. Tesco will make all reasonable adjustments to the working environment and, indeed, will redesign the job if they feel a disabled candidate has outstanding qualities."

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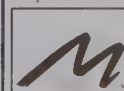


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Letters to the Editor



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Website: www.disabilitynow.org.uk

'See the Person' debate

Given the letter from Nasa Begum (*DN, August*) pointing out that the "Kathy is hard to control" poster in the DfEE's See the Person campaign is racist and disabling, I was astonished to see your full page publication of the offending poster in the September issue.

As a white disabled woman, I would add my voice to hers, whilst adding my own criticism about the image of women portrayed in the "Problem with sex" poster.

Even without the widespread anger within the disability movement about this campaign, these posters are badly designed and do not support the Government's stated message. They are clearly not targeted at disabled people but at non-disabled employers and the general public.

The fact that *DN*, which claims to support disabled people's campaigns against discrimination, now adds insult to injury defies belief.

Mairian Corker
University of Central Lancashire

I was present at the launch of the DfEE poster campaign and certainly got the impression that this was part of the Government discharging its responsibility concerning disability discrimination rather than passing the buck.

I must respect the views of the British Council of Disabled People, though I would see the campaign as one small step, insufficient on its own of course, in the right direction. I have copies of two of the posters displayed in my office (I'm a lecturer in nursing).

Philip Scullion
Coventry University

The "Kathy" poster is part of a Government campaign to confront prejudices against disabled people and covers several groups. Some people have found the campaign and the posters offensive. More views, please – Editor.

**10 complaints covering two of the posters (not "Kathy") have not been upheld by the Advertising Standards Authority.*

Stalinist model of disability

Like many disabled people, I've been following the debate in *DN* on the recent BBC TV series, *The Disabled Century*, with great interest. I noted the trenchant criticisms levelled at the series (*August*) and was looking forward to the BBC's reply.

Unfortunately, all we got was a display of personal petulance and hurt feelings (*September*). As a measured response to an important debate, this won't do.

In particular I wanted to know why the production had failed to mention any positive contribution made by medicine to disabled people's lives in the past half century. Examples abound: the discovery of the polio vaccine, the vastly

improved life span of people with spinal injuries, spina bifida, cystic fibrosis, etc. Was this omission accidental or, as I suspect, a deliberate rewriting of the historical record to conceal awkward truths?

The main aim of *The Disabled Century* seems to have been to give a historical basis to the social model of disability. But this, alas, also exposed the well-known chief problem area of the social model: its inability to see any medical intervention against disability except in negative, often hostile, terms.

It refuses to acknowledge that most disabled people see themselves and their disabilities

for much of the time in medical terms. That they see themselves as much more than this is, of course, a moot point.

I strongly suspect that those in the BBC's Disability Programmes Unit involved in the production of *The Disabled Century* have stuck themselves into an ideological straightjacket. At the least, this is a case of self-censorship, of wilful suppression of awkward facts which, if acknowledged, might have challenged the series' main argument. What was presented was not so much the social model of disability as the Stalinist model of disability.

Michael Morgan
Belfast, Northern Ireland

No swinging in the wind

DN's motoring correspondent, David Griffiths, of the Mobility Information Service, writes:

Clearly Owen Davies (*DN letters, September*) either had not been shown how to use his loading device correctly or simply purchased any old lift and expected it to do the job without adjustment.

Scooters can be lifted horizontally. Installation and correct operation of an electric hoist require the scooter or wheelchair to be fitted with the appropriate linkage or anchor point to ensure that the machine remains level when




It works: Betty Gunter with the hoist on her scooter, properly installed by Hodge Mobility of Wraysbury, Middlesex.

raised or lowered.

Manufacturers and reputable installers are particular about such matters and it is both dangerous and foolish to attempt to operate a hoist in

the manner which Mr Davies appears to have adopted. I suggest he takes his vehicle and scooter to a specialist supplier or asks the supplier to instruct him in its correct, safe usage.



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DN's diary

by Dan Batten

Bad sign

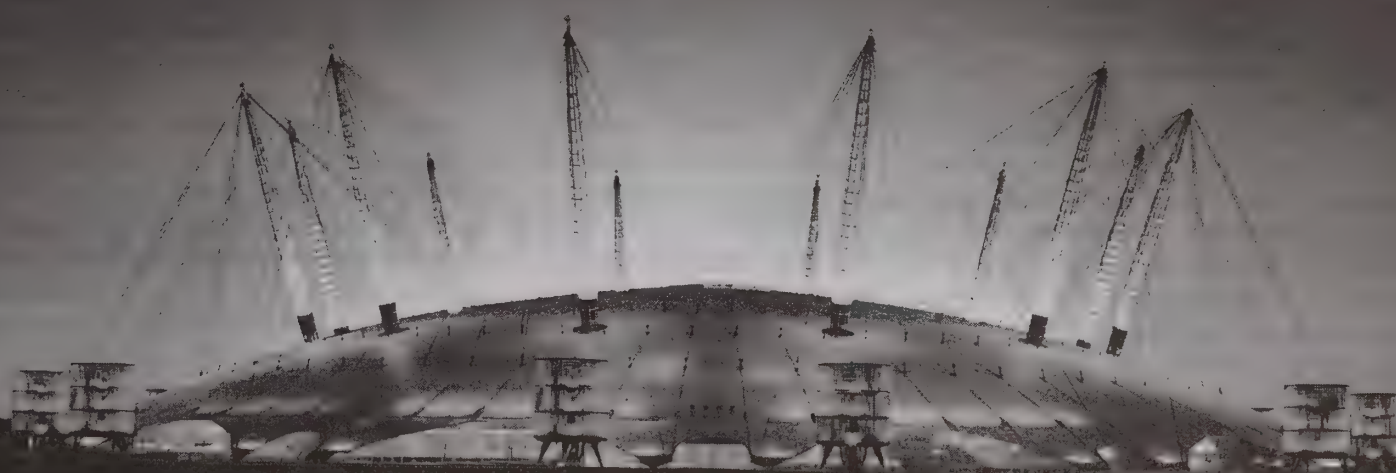
DN was pleased to get a press release from the Victoria and Albert Museum about how it was hosting a series of sign interpreted talks on the works of some famous artists. Not so pleased, though, to find there was no minicom number for prospective patrons to get further information. Maybe the V&A could do with their own interpreter – in common sense.

Dark day

The Sunday Times reported on the most popular restaurant of the moment in Paris. *Goût du Noir* (A Taste of Darkness) is a sealed-up cellar which leaves its diners in the dark, served by blind staff. According to owner Phillippe Reilbac, this encourages empathy with blind people "by sharing their state". Mr Sunday Times feared a "trend of pseudo handicapped dining". If only he could buck that old trend: using outdated language.

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of the
millennium



After climbing Kilimanjaro in his wheelchair and powerlifting for Britain at the Olympics, Jon Amos decided he needed a challenge. So what, Sally Brown asks, did he do next? He hand cycled across Australia, of course

He's a record breaker

Riding with a support team of non-disabled British Royal Marine Commandos, 41-year-old Jon Amos from Bristol hand cycled 3,026km from Darwin to Adelaide in 141 hours, finishing on 13 August.

Jon's epic hand cycle ride was not only the first of its kind – it may well have secured him a place in the record books, too. On some sections of the trip his speeds could have put him at the top of the mainstream Asia-Pacific cyclists' league table in the *Guinness Book of Records*.

Jon, a sports consultant and watchmaker, conducted experiments along the way, with the aim of discovering more about disabled athletes' physiology. He hopes that the statistics will be used as the basis for a new university degree in disabled sports science.

"We wanted to do research into how the body of a spinally-injured person would react to an event like this," said Jon, who broke his back in a lorry accident in 1976.

Jon's blood pressure and urine osmolarity (hydration



Cross country: Jon (left) and Simon Davies (right) near Ayers Rock

levels) were tested twice a day. At some stages he was drinking nine litres of fluids a day, almost double what would be expected. Jon's heart rate was also unusually high – 75-95 per cent of the maximum rate at times, compared to his companions' 52-55 per cent. The statistics prove that hand cycling is an extremely effective form of exercise.

"It's harder than regular cycling because you're using a smaller muscle group," Jon said. "With foot cycling you get

the "second heart" of the calf muscles that help pump blood back to the heart. Also, your arms are above your heart."

Jon sees it as a sport with a future: "It's got phenomenal potential. It could be like wheelchair basketball and be used for reverse integration. Disabled and non-disabled people can take part together."

Hand cycling is scheduled as a demonstration sport at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, with the aim of making it a competitive event in 2004.

The facts

- Jon hand cycled 3,026km
- He averaged 100 miles a day
- His top speed was 25mph
- Darwin to Adelaide is uphill all the way
- The route followed that of 19th century explorer John McDougal, who crossed Australia looking for inland seas in 1861

Join the club

- The UK Hand Cycling Association (UKHCA) was formed earlier this year to promote and encourage hand cycling.
- The first National Hand Cycling Championships took place on 19 September at Curborough Sprint Circuit, Leicestershire.
- The UKHCA produces a quarterly newsletter and is planning to arrange other events. Tel (01606) 882041.
- WIN! WIN! Next month we will have six copies of *Roof of Africa on Wheels* (Alfresco Books, £8.95) to give away. The book gives a thrilling account of last year's climb up Kilimanjaro.

All Jon's adventures, from climbing Great Gable in the Lake District in a wheelchair to his recent achievement down under, have been used to raise money for the British Wheelchair Sports Foundation. As a director of the British Federation of Disabled Sport and former Olympic powerlifter, Jon has a great interest in disabled sport in general: "I was getting fed up with disabled athletes having no money. Knowing you've got to fundraise takes the edge off

your training. We decided to raise money for them."

Now Jon is collating his Australian data and waiting for the *Guinness Book of Records* to get in touch. He has amazing memories to look back on: "The headwind was like a wall in front of us all the way. But the worse thing was the stink of the roadkill, and going over the cattle grids was like breaking my back again."

But Jon says he enjoyed it: "If it had been easy it wouldn't have been worth doing."

Christmas Is Coming!



Robin red breast:
designed by Louise Evans, aged 8.

This Christmas, DN is offering readers the opportunity to purchase Christmas cards and Scope 2000 diaries.

Designed by a former Ingfield Manor School pupil, the Robin card comes in packs of 5 and costs only £1.25 per pack.

The Scope 2000 diary features a week-per-page, comes in a dark blue colour with gold corners and costs £1.99.

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"My biggest concern was finding toilet facilities en route, but I was really surprised," said Jon. "We were in a place in the middle of nowhere – called Daily Waters, funnily enough – with a population of 14, a pub, a garage and a couple of houses. We rolled up at the campsite and one of the lads said: "You'll be alright here, Jon." And there it was, a purpose-built disabled access dunny. I couldn't believe my eyes. It just goes to show that the accessibility message is really getting through in some places. If they can do that in the outback, why can't they do it more often over here?"

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Bike bug

Quad biking was a breeze for Stuart Fynn, as Clara Quantrill found out

Falling off a quad bike is not supposed to happen – but then Stuart Fynn did admit to getting slightly carried away when he road-tested a specially adapted bike on a one-day training course in the heart of the Cotswolds.

His confidence boosted by a short training session, 24-year-old Stuart took full control of his own vehicle and was soon flying round the track like there was no tomorrow. That was when he came a cropper, but wheelchair user Stuart laughed off the accident and was quick to emphasise that the less confident can take things a lot slower.

Stuart was taking part in a new project aimed at opening up the countryside to disabled people. Launched by the charity Sportmobility, the scheme supplies four-wheeled Yamaha Breeze bikes, puts drivers through their paces on a day's training course and then points them in the direction of otherwise inaccessible trails through National Trust (NT) land.

Sportmobility is planning to develop different levels of licensing according to ability and then, like ski runs, the woodland trails will be colour-graded according to difficulty. The scheme is initially

restricted to the NT land at Woodchester Park, Gloucestershire, but Sportmobility chairman David Heard says the charity is working with the NT to open up other areas.

Stuart, who was fired with enthusiasm after his first taste of quad biking, would be in favour of this. He lives in Hornchurch, Essex, and had to travel quite a way to get to the course. But now he's really got the quad biking bug and is keen to do it again.

"The bikes are really good for getting out on and going to places you wouldn't be able to get to otherwise," he said. "If you are wary or your balance isn't too good, you can take it slowly. But once I got going, I was really flying along."

Factfile

- Quad biking sessions are free to members of the National Rehabilitation Centre for the Paralysed. A small discretionary charge is made to other people.
- For details contact Sportmobility's events and activities organiser Paul Orsler, tel: (01453) 884419, e-mail: sportmobility@nrcp.demon.co.uk



The sea, the sea: one of many great views on the Cleveland Way

Be on your way

The Cleveland Way Project has just published two new guides for disabled people, so there's now no excuse for not getting out to enjoy this beautiful part of the North East. The Cleveland Way is one of 13 National Trails in England and Wales. It stretches 110 miles from Helmsley to Filey, covering woodland, lakeside paths, moorland and the coast.

- The *Cleveland Way Access Guide* describes nine stretches of the trail, none of which have steps or stiles. The guide includes details of gradient, accessible toilets and smoothness of surface.
- The *Cleveland Way Access Guide for the Visually Impaired* gives information about the challenges you are likely to have if you are a visually impaired walker. It is available in large print, in Braille and on tape.

Tel: (01429) 868495.



Hot wheels: Stuart on his quad bike at Woodchester Park

Don't let the weather
Wrap up warm,
Some activities

Like a



There she goes: Lucy shows w

Lucy Watson thought
accident, but then s

I had always been involved in sport and assumed I would progress into a sporting career. I was doing a PE degree course when I had an accident in which my foot was caught in a capsized canoe.

I was left with what I thought was a simple sprained



Listen up: preliminary pep talk

ankle. A few weeks passed and my foot got worse. I was diagnosed as having a rare condition which affects the nervous system. I now need to use crutches for day-to-day mobility.

After the accident I was in a sporting desert and was wondering what activities, if any, would be suitable for me. Towards the end of last year my friend Gwyneth Wright, who is fundraising coordinator for the British Disabled Water Ski Association (BDWSA), suggested that I visit my nearest water ski centre, Herd



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more fun when you do them in mud!

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GWYNETH WRIGHT AND DONALD WATSON

ade of on her first trip over Heron Water

rt was out of the question after a canoeing
d water skiing – and loved it

in Middlesex.
was a very cold but bright
mber morning and, as I
ached Heron Lake, I was filled
nervous excitement. I was wel-
d by an extremely friendly group
ple and, with lots of encourage-
from everyone, I was soon kitted
n my fleecy suit, drysuit, life jacket
helmet. I was ready to hit the water.
cess from the clubhouse to the jetty
asy (as might be expected). There I
y crutches behind and was assisted
he water. With an instructor on
side, it wasn't long before I was ski-

ing independently behind
the boat.

For the first time since my
accident, I had an
overwhelming sense of achieve-
ment and satisfaction – and a
permanent smile on my face.
The experience far exceeded
all my expectations.



Skiing from dawn till dusk

I'm looking forward to
water skiing again at Heron
Lake and, when I have
achieved the required stan-
dard, I would love to train as a
qualified instructor and
encourage others to take up
the challenge of this tremen-
dously exciting sport. I have
had a setback, but after several
operations things are looking
better and I am hoping to ski
again very soon.

See page 11 for the results of
the World Disabled Water Ski
Championships.

Track and field

Linda Mooncie wanted disabled people to be able to go to one of
Hastings' finest areas, so she helped build an accessible trail

This summer, the Access
for All Trail in
Hastings Country Park
was officially opened.

The park extends over 640
acres, most of which is a site of
Special Scientific Interest
comprising two ancient wood-
lands, grassland and coastline.
There are stunning views
across the Channel, with
Dover to the east and Beachy
Head to the west.

Three years ago, I saw a
documentary about a trail in a
country park, and the Hastings
and Rother Disability Forum,
of which I am vice chair,
decided it wanted to have one
like it. Hastings Borough

Council owns the park and it
was necessary to apply for
planning permission; it took
over a year for the
proposal to get through. The
council finally agreed to give us
£20,000, on the understanding
that the Forum would match
this sum. I set about writing
endless letters and, eventually,
the money was raised from
local charities, larger trusts,
grants, local businesses and
other groups.

The Access for All Trail
starts at the disabled parking
area near the visitor centre,
which is open at weekends. It is
600 metres long, with picnic
tables at intervals, and goes

right into the heart of the park.
The views are breathtaking
and you will see lots of
different birds and plants along
the way.

It is possible to get to other
parts of the park from the
trail, depending on what aids
you need. There are plans to
provide scooters on loan from
the visitor centre from next
year and an audio guide is
being put together.

Already the number of
disabled visitors to the park
has trebled. Some people used
to be restricted to enjoying the
view from the car park; now
they, too, can experience the
beauty and peace of this place.



On track: Linda opens the trail with the Lord Mayor of Hastings

Factfile

- Hastings Country Park is situated off a minor road to Fairlight, close to the A259 between Hastings and Rye.
- It has parking for disabled people and accessible toilets – you will need a RADAR key.
- Countryside Ranger Service, tel: (01424) 813225.
- Hastings Tourist Information Office, tel: (01424) 781111.

Factfile

Heron Lake is the BDWSA's
ational Development Centre. It is
ely dedicated to disabled
er skiing. Schools, colleges,
bility groups, day centres and
ividuals can all come along to
n to ski or improve their skills.
morning's skiing can cost about
(for one hour's boat time). There
ommodation which sleeps up to
nd is available at reasonable rates.
ople of all ages can take part, and
qualified volunteer instructors are
to accommodate most disabilities
uding learning difficulties). All
rs are assessed to decide the most
ropriate equipment for them.
ne BDWSA is split into five
ons, all of which hold beginner
. For more information and to
out where your local centre is,
act the BDSWA at Heron Lake,
ysbury, near Staines, Middlesex
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ite: www.bdwsa.org.uk

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Motability

'The trust is therapy in itself'

When Richard Conibear found his son Alexander benefited from dolphin therapy, he didn't just keep it to himself. He set up a trust to provide other families with information and advice

When our son Alexander was born in 1996 with cerebral palsy (CP), we started raising money to get him into the Institute for Brain-Injured Children in Bridgwater. When we finally raised the cash and got him a place there, our hopes were dashed – Alexander did not respond well to the alternative therapies on offer. We began to look elsewhere.

As time went on, we heard about dolphin therapy in Hawaii, at the Dolphin and You centre, and decided to give it a try. Alexander had therapy with captive and wild dolphins. It wasn't hands-on – Alexander

wasn't even put into the water – but while he was with the animals, he became calm and seemed to listen to their soothing noises. The facilities are right by the Pacific and the surroundings are completely private and relaxing – the whole family benefited.

We were thoroughly impressed with that particular centre but realised the whole area of dolphin therapy can be a bit of a minefield. We had done some research into different dolphin centres around the world and found enormous differences in price. A trip could cost a family thousands of pounds, but, with a bit of assistance, you could arrange a trip to Ireland yourself for a fraction of that sum.

We realised there was a need for parents to have access to information about the centres before they committed themselves and their money. We also realised that the glossy brochures some of these centres produce might encourage families to believe that dolphin therapy is a cure. It isn't – Alexander definitely felt the benefit, but we knew it was relief rather than a remedy.

We set up the Alexander Trust to help. It aims to find out about dolphin centres everywhere – what they offer in

terms of facilities and therapies and what they cost. This is very time-consuming and costly, as we feel we cannot comment on centres until we have checked them out ourselves. But we are determined to get accurate information for parents interested in dolphin therapy.

There are many centres, some in America and Mexico, but more are now opening in Europe, including Switzerland and Belgium, as the therapy gains in popularity. When we raise enough funds, we want to offer families financial help to get to these places. Dolphin therapy is not just for children with CP; it can be beneficial for all kinds of people.

The trust is now finding new areas of interest. We are looking into the cost of special needs toys and equipment, which we feel are generally overpriced. We are planning to sell "bubble tubes" (clear plastic cylinders filled with distilled water to produce relaxing bubble and light effects) via our website; Alexander loves his bubble tube, and we want to be able to offer them at an affordable price so that other families can benefit.

And we are looking at other alternative therapies. We recently took Alexander to a chiropractor in Honolulu, Hawaii, for a "feel and touch" session. We have started to see him relax much more. He smiles a lot and generally seems happier. Of course, we are quite aware that the alternative therapies Alexander has undergone may not have caused the improvement, but I do believe that, in relaxing him, they have certainly not done him any harm.

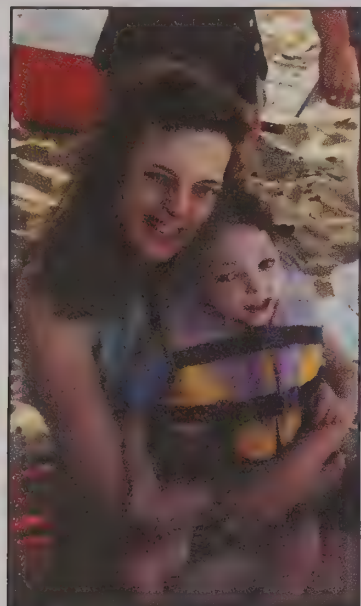


Group therapy: Dolphin and You benefited the whole family

Of course, for the Alexander Trust to be able to advise on all these therapies, it needs more money. Our fundraising methods are wide-ranging. We hold a weekly pub quiz, which has been going for three years and raises quite a bit of cash. Our local newspaper prints regular updates on our

progress, which also helps generate interest. I cycled from John o'Groats to Land's End, and we have had countless discos, walks and other events.

These fundraising efforts, and the fact that they will enable us to assist other families, are surely therapy in themselves.



On the beach: Alexander with mum Linda



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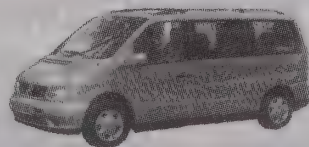
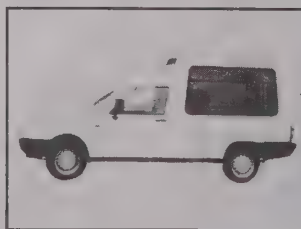
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Tel: 01626 853050

The cost

For five people, a three-week stay at the Dolphin and You centre in Hawaii could cost about \$3,780 (about £2,500), including five therapy sessions with captive dolphins – extra sessions can be booked. For more information, contact the Alexander Trust.

Alexander Trust, tel/fax: (01225) 337178,
e-mail: Richard@AlexTrust59.freeserve.co.uk,
website: www.execulink.com/~road/alexhomepage2.htm

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Television

Paul Darke

BBC2 and Channel 4 are making it impossible to turn the TV on without catching some programme about what it is like to be bodily different.

Video Diaries: Not Stupid (BBC2, 14 August) and *Video Diaries: Spit It Out* (BBC2, 22 August) explored autism and stammering respectively in a personalised perspective.

Hidden Love: A Love Less Ordinary (C4, 31 August), a considered look at sexuality and disability, was a cracker of a documentary. Penny – a severely arthritic porn writer with a penchant for nude modelling, Mieke – a stroke victim finding partners via the Dutch SAR sex organisation, and Ros – an autistic object fetishist – all spoke of their sex lives in a disarming manner that hit just the right spot.

Omagh - The Legacy (BBC2, 15 August), the main focus of which was the story of one woman's recovery from injuries caused by the Omagh bomb, was insulting. It exploited its subject in a voyeuristic manner. The woman's dignity was so great it made me ashamed even to have watched.

Life Support (BBC1, 23 August), a medical ethics drama series, covered the issue of requested euthanasia in relation to motor neurone disease. The show was actually an advert for living wills and euthanasia.

The two disability episodes of the sex series *Adult Lives* were surreal. *Welcome to Norfolk Dr Griffin* (BBC2, 7 September) was about an elderly white woman's romance with an Afro-Caribbean amputee. It was followed by *Permission to Love* (BBC2, 8 September), a look at the sex lives of people with learning difficulties.

Next month, we have Channel 4's *The Deaf Century: The Sound of Silence* (C4, 2, 9 and 16 October). Its three parts look at a century of deafness: 1900-45 – an era of ostracism; 1945-65 – a period of conformity; and 1965-99 – when recognition of sign language begins.

Also, look out for *Sound and Fury* (C4, 10 October) – one family's reaction to the issue of cochlear implants.



Soul sister: Charlotte Kelly is a definite hit

PAULO SUTCH

Art

Gioya Steinke

One of the most exciting, colourful and enjoyable exhibitions of the year. That was the opinion of many visitors attending the opening of Khaled Alvi's show at the Diorama Art Centre in London.

Khaled, profoundly deaf since his birth in 1965, later developed tunnel vision when a teenager. At the age of 23 he discovered his inner gift for drawing and painting. He says it is "life" to him and this is most apparent in all his pictures.

They are so clear and colourful that viewers really get to enjoy his observations on life, his imagination and his humour. The influence of two great artists, Van Gogh and Picasso, show in some of the paintings. But his own style makes its

impact, too, leaving viewers with a sense of sheer pleasure and participation in his world.

Outstanding features of Khaled's works include the beautiful colours, the deft sureness of line and the variety of subject – he ranges from family groups to cats' eyes, from abstract ducks to an amazing maze.

The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) collaborated on this exhibition and took the opportunity to demonstrate a splendid array of equipment and techniques that can assist sensory impaired people. Individual pictures were enlarged and brought up close on a screen. Audio description, Braille interpretation of text and pictures and a whole host of personal assistance were all available. It really helped me enjoy this splendid show.

For information about the equipment used, call Sue King at the RNIB, tel: 0171-388 1266.

Film

Simon Minty

It will come as no surprise to fans of Channel 4's cult comedy *South Park* to find that this first feature-length film version includes frequent racist, sexist and disablist language. It continues to use its deceptively simple animation to great effect. The plot is bizarre and the jokes intentionally crude.

South Park's "stars" are four dysfunctional third-grade kids from a redneck suburb of America. They sneak into a 15-rated film; they become affected by its content and start swearing at will. This, for *South Park*, means inevitable war with Canada, the death of Bill Gates and frequent bursts into inexplicable songs.

Disability references are not hard to find. We hear from a "male midget in a swimsuit", a

Vietcong who uses a voice synthesiser, a teacher who calls his kids "retards" and Big Gay Al who sings about his overwhelming happiness. In fact, Al, apparently, is so happy that he doesn't even "feel sorry" for a wheelchair user. I'd like to believe the social model of disability has moved the scriptwriters to remove pity from the picture, but, in reality, *South Park* leaves no minority or stereotype untouched and doesn't aim to make any significant social comment.

If you know *South Park*, you'll probably quite like it. But the film is unlikely to draw others in. There are a few gems, such as the racist army general being asked by a black soldier if he's heard of the emancipation movement. The general's reply is deadpan: "No. I've never listened to hip-hop music."

The film doesn't sustain these laughs, but, while on most levels it is pointless, it can be funny and enjoyable.

Music

Ian Wright

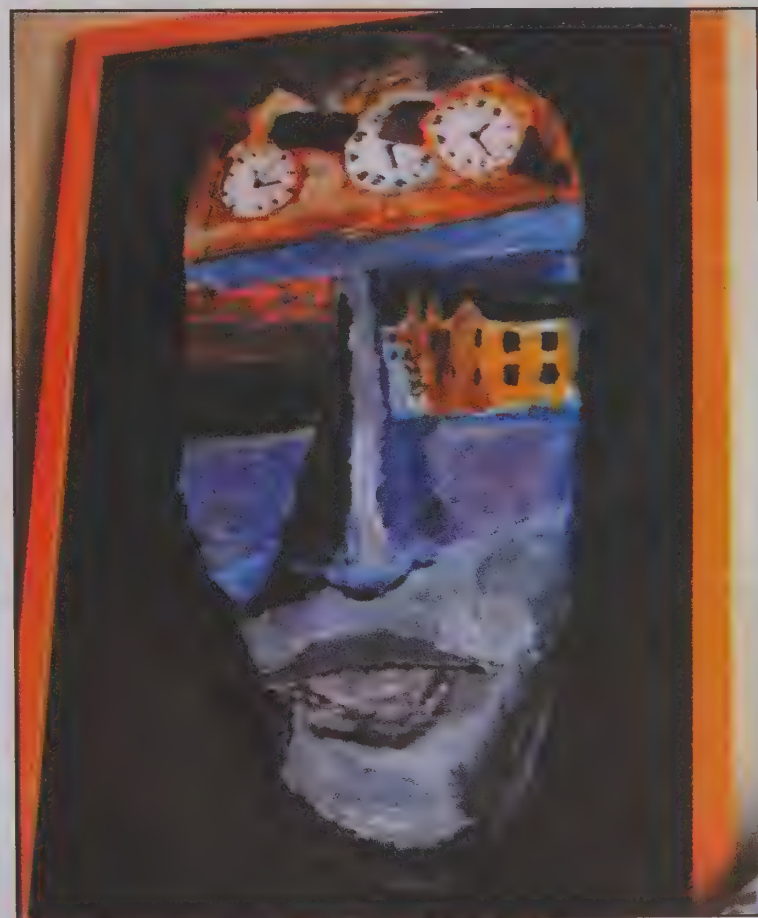
Ever since she debuted with *Soul II Soul* as a teenager a couple of years back, UK soul aficionados have eagerly awaited the release of this solo album, *Charlotte*, from Charlotte Kelly.

They will not be disappointed.

From the single *Someday*, an uplifting number reminiscent of Incognito, to the ballad *Addiction*, Charlotte rejects the formulaic approach of US counterparts to take the listener on a journey through a variety of styles and moods.

Her songs are about self-belief and a determination to succeed in spite of the isolation she felt as a teenager, left out of the in-crowd because of her near-blindness.

"Just be yourself," she tells us in *Skin*, a former US No 1 club hit; "I know how to survive," she asserts in *Shelter*, a dance number which could be her manifesto. Other highlights include the gospel-influenced *Somebody's Baby*, the funk-ed-up *Don't Be Afraid Of The Dark*, and the acoustic ballad *Distance*. In short, an outstanding debut which all soul heads should acquire. *Parlophone Rhythm Series*. *Charlotte will be at the Jazz Café, London, on 15 October, tel: 0171-916 6060.*



Black and blue: Fantastic face, 1992, Khaled Alvi

KATE LOMAS

Video top five

- 1. VERY BAD THINGS** (Universal): American stag night comedy – so all the usual naughtiness.
- 2. THIN RED LINE** (Fox Pathé): Terence Malick's epic war film – gripping stuff.
- 3. LITTLE VOICE** (Buena Vista): Jane Horrocks sings her heart out in this endearing comedy.
- 4. YOU'VE GOT MAIL** (Warner): Modern day e-mail romance with Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks.
- 5. A BUG'S LIFE** (Buena Vista): Another fabulously animated tale from the makers of *Toy Story*.

Chart supplied by MIRB.

❑ Closed captions - video has pre-recorded word-for-word captions.

Look out for

• *Mark It!* is an exhibition of art by adults with learning disabilities, the result of a course on art and presentation. ACAVA, Studio One, 54 Blechynden Street, London, 13 October, tel: 0171-700 0100.

• The Year of the Artist starts in June 2000, and the North West Arts Board is looking for people with ideas. There will be 100 artist residencies in the North West, for which artists will work in a variety of venues – anywhere from bus stations to bakeries! Contact Neil Morrinn, tel: 0151-709 0671.

• If you have a hearing impairment but love the theatre, why not get yourself on the free SPIT (Signed Performances in Theatre) mailing list. Send your details to SPIT, PO Box 6028, London NW4 2ZB.

No more taboo



used to be considered taboo, but now medical use of cannabis has become the subject of polite conversation. America was the first country to pick up on the publishing opportunities of this interest, but the most intriguing recent book about cannabis is a British one – *Cannabis Conspiracy* by Patrick Matthews.

The book is the readable story of the author's adventures while researching the book. He enters the shady world of suppliers and doesn't shy away from the scientific research. The book gives an entertaining profile of Dr Nehas, America's leading anti-cannabis campaigner, who is determined

that the drug is dangerous. Nehas dismisses patients who claim cannabis helps them as a "scandal and hoax".

The book is put together in a haphazard fashion, making it an ideal browser's book. Matthews looks in detail at the social and ritual use of cannabis around the world. He tells us that cannabis is not considered a "problem" in some countries but is treated in the same way that we treat alcohol. He suggests that the best form of control would be a framework such as exists for alcohol – restricted partly by law, but mainly by ingrained social codes. Cannabis, he says, has not been allowed to fit into our social setting this century.

Clare Hodges

Bloomsbury, £12.99.

Further cannabis reading

- *Is Marijuana the Right Medicine for You?* Bill Zimmerman, Simon and Schuster, £7.99.
- *Marijuana Medical Handbook*, Ed Rosenthal, Quick American Archives, £13.99.
- *Cannabis for Lunch*, Eric, £6.99.
- *Godless Morality*, Richard Holloway, Canongate, £9.99. Bishop Holloway's lecture defending the legalisation of cannabis for medical use (*DN*, April '98) is included in a wider discussion of moral issues.



Ritalin response

How sad that *Ritalin Nation* attacks a medication that, since its

first use for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in 1957, has proved itself many times over in its effectiveness and safety.

The majority of parents like me agonise over whether to use medication to help their child, and most try Ritalin only after everything else has failed.

Richard DeGrandpre talks of ADHD as a disorder brought about by today's lifestyle. I would refer him to an article written by George Frederick Still for the *Lancet* in 1902, giving an account of 20 children who were "passionate, deviant, spiteful and lacking inhibitory volition". Still made the radical suggestion that bad parenting was not to blame; nor, may I suggest to Mr DeGrandpre, was television!

The ADHD Family Support Group UK accepts that today's lifestyle does little to help our non-conformist children.

Perhaps Mr DeGrandpre should use his resources to research the education system that is obligatory for our children but often leaves them damaged, and possibly causes many of them to press their own "self-destruct button" in their teens.

Barbara Tuffill

WW Norton, £15.95.

Brief history of a marriage



Jane Hawking is jealous and bitter.

Dumped by disabled genius Stephen Hawking,

she has written a kiss-and-tell memoir of her 25-year marriage to the charismatic master of the universe.

Stephen Hawking is an infantile despot. He abandoned the devoted wife and mother of his three children, who put in

years of domestic drudgery, during which he scorned her academic aspirations and belittled her spiritual views.

Just kidding.

Music to Move the Stars documents the clash of irreconcilable perspectives. For the reader, there are conflicts too. Where are your loyalties? To Supercrip Stephen, one of disability's great achievers? Or to Jane, his carer, condemned to an endless round of housework, childcare, nursing and interpreting by Stephen's refusal to accept outside care?

Jane is reticent in her criticism of Stephen. She blames the frustrations of his motor neurone disease and refers to his stoicism as an inspiration.

Whether Stephen made Jane a slave to the home I suspect we will never know. Ironically, it was Stephen who got the Companion of Honour Award. Let us hope that, for the sake of their years together, he finds the brief time necessary to read this book.

Agnes Fletcher

Macmillan, £20.

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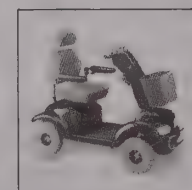
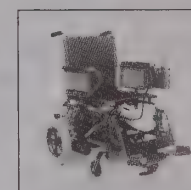
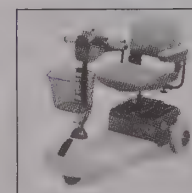
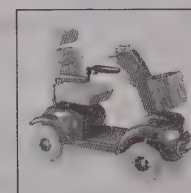
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MOBILITY CONSULTANTS

DN motoring correspondent David Griffiths gives a sneak preview of the London Motor Show. He may not like the venue, but he certainly thinks some of the new vehicles are worth a closer look

The car's the star

It's an ironic world that dreams up an exhibition for road vehicles yet advises visitors to use public transport to get there.

In fact it makes nonsense of the whole concept, but such is the hopelessly congested location of Earl's Court that attempting to reach it by road during the event is likely to prove a stressful experience. For many disabled people, public transport is still no option, so for lots of DN readers the hype of a one-stop ticket combining travel and admission to the



French finesse: Renault's Avantime is on sale next year

show will be pointless.

Usurped by Frankfurt and Geneva, at which most of the

glamour model launching will already have taken place, the London show still relies heavily on motor sport and classic cars to maintain interest.

Not that there will be nothing to see – far from it. Honda is revealing its new Accord VTEC SE Sport with sequential shift transmission. This does away with the clutch but still requires the user to move on the lever. That means instantaneous gear changing, but you still need two good hands to handle the vehicle.

Not to be outdone, Alfa Romeo has "selespeed" on its new 156. This offers both sequential gearshifting and fully automatic transmission, leaving the choice to the driver.

Transmission control is by means of buttons on the steering wheel.

A revamped Fiesta makes its debut on the Ford stand, while Subaru will have its updated Legacy all-wheel drive saloon and estates on show.

Fiat's Punto is all-new, as is

Toyota's Verso. It claims to have "more load space than a Renault Scenic" yet is actually smaller. It will require a service once every 20,000 miles (or every two years), which should make it cheaper to run, while a 60,000-mile warranty will take care of any unforeseen problems.

For sheer daring, Renault's Avantime takes some beating. Futuristic and individual in true French motoring tradition, there is just nothing else like it.



Very classy: the Subaru Legacy Saloon 2.0 GL AWD

Multipla, a six-seater mini people carrier. We can only hope that it is better than the original one – an ice-cream van that drove like two Vespa scooters tied together.

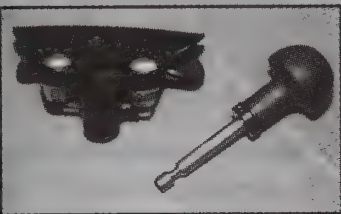
One of the more interesting launches will be that of

It has a top speed of 140 mph and access is good, too, via twin parallel doors.

So, there's much to see at this year's London Motor Show and, if you can bear the journey, it's definitely worth a visit.

The London Motor Show takes place 20-31 October at Earl's Court. Watch out for classic cars (26 October) and motor sport (27 and 28 October). Tickets are £12 at the entrance or £10 if you use the booking line, tel: 0870-900 4499. Visit the London Motor Show website at www.londonmotorshow.co.uk

Safety first



There have been concerns that old-style steering braces mounted across steering wheels, used by upper limb amputees, could be dangerous in cars with airbags. Now RSL Steeper and Steering

Developments have come up with a new rim clamp device (above) that should be safer. For more information, contact the Forum of Mobility Centres at Banstead Mobility Centre, tel: 0181-770 1151.

But David Griffiths said it was still not safe for anyone with an artificial arm to drive a car with an airbag.

"This device makes it slightly safer, but the only safe way is to disconnect the airbag – that is illegal in this country."

People with artificial limbs are permitted to disconnect airbags in America, he said, and legislation should be introduced in the UK to allow them to drive safely.

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THE LONDON INSTITUTE



On the outside: Stephen now feels free to enjoy time with his family

Safer inside

Stephen Drake had to go to prison three times before he managed to face his obsessive compulsive disorder

I began life constructively, gaining eight O levels at above average grades. Then I chose to go straight into the workplace.

Everything was going quite smoothly, when my life suddenly changed. It was a day

that will forever remain in my memory. I was watching the news, not particularly interested in it, when the newsreader began describing the brutal mugging of an elderly woman. The pictures nearly made me retch.

"Wouldn't it be terrible to do something as awful as that?" I thought.

A few days later I was strolling along, when an elderly woman approached me, walking stick in one hand and handbag in the other. I plodded past her. In an instant, an "unwanted thought" flashed into my head: "Did I hit her?"

I turned to look. She was still walking along, none the worse for my "assault".

"Thank God," I thought. "I definitely didn't hit her."

After that, the thoughts came regularly. I never hit anyone, but I spent my time

"In an instant the thought flashed into my head: 'Did I hit her?'"

worrying that I had. It wasn't long before I was unable to go out. Life was unbearable.

The idea that I would be safer in prison came suddenly. I knew I could never discuss my problems and realised that jail was my only hope. Within a month, I was breaking into a house and, a few offences later, I was in Lewes Prison.

It took two more prison sentences to make me realise I had to get help. I had tried a psychiatric hospital in between prison spells but detested every minute and, during a weekend break, got back into prison.

This time, I was more determined. I made an appointment with a psychiatrist and, after a few sessions, discovered I had obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). With medication and regular visits, I began to improve. The unwanted thoughts were not quite so disturbing.

That was a few years ago. I still take regular therapy walks with my community support worker, who comes to the house where I now live with my partner and three children.

I have improved greatly and continue to have faith in my medication and therapy. At the moment, freedom is definitely an improvement on life inside.

For help with OCD, contact your GP or the Phobics Society, tel: 0161-881 1937.



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Credit card abuse is demonstrated by Garfield, the cartoon cat. Surrounded by expensive worldly goods, and

'Don't panic. If you are several thousand pounds in debt, a card supplier will be grateful for anything paid back'

brandishing a big camera, he says: "I'll have fun, fun, fun until Daddy takes the plastic away." More realistically, it is a change of circumstances that may trigger your debt problem - one day you can afford credit; the next something happens and you can't.

Traditionally, if you wrote a cheque with no money in your bank account, the cheque bounced. Today, cheque cards guarantee your cheque will be honoured, regardless of the amount of money in your account, and overdrafts no longer have a stigma attached. Credit card balances can be

When Malcolm Williams found himself with a credit card bill for £6,000, he knew it was time to get help. He passes on the lessons he learned

Plastic's not always fantastic

balance by more than a small amount. At that point, I realised my debts were out of control.

Getting impartial advice from a credit card company or getting them to take your debt problem seriously is difficult. To them you are "well within your credit limit". One card supplier said: "People we normally deal with have that kind of balance on 20 credit cards."

When you contact the credit card supplier, the first person you speak to is a credit controller. Their job is to get as

"Seek advice early. Until your offer of payment is accepted, interest will continue to accrue"

much money out of you as they can. Whatever you offer, they will try to get more.

But don't panic. If you are several thousand pounds in debt, a card supplier will be grateful for anything paid back.

If your money situation is hopeless, your account should

messages reminding you that "your account is in arrears and requires immediate action".

You will be advised of being in breach of your terms and conditions and that a default notice has been logged against you. This can be done if a card supplier accepted reduced payments. ("Default" simply means you are not doing what was originally agreed by signing the credit agreement.) So, you can have the upper hand in repaying what you can afford. You will also be required to sign an indemnity form confirming that you have

returned or destroyed the card.

Seek advice early. Until your offer of payment is accepted, interest will continue to accrue. Not all credit card companies rush to help bad payers.

To avoid getting into a mess again you must take serious control of your budget, so that you control your debts and they don't control you. Public utilities gladly accept payment by direct debit; that also shows your bank that you are budgeting, not indiscriminately spending. The "I'll just stick it on my credit card" attitude must be left firmly in the past.

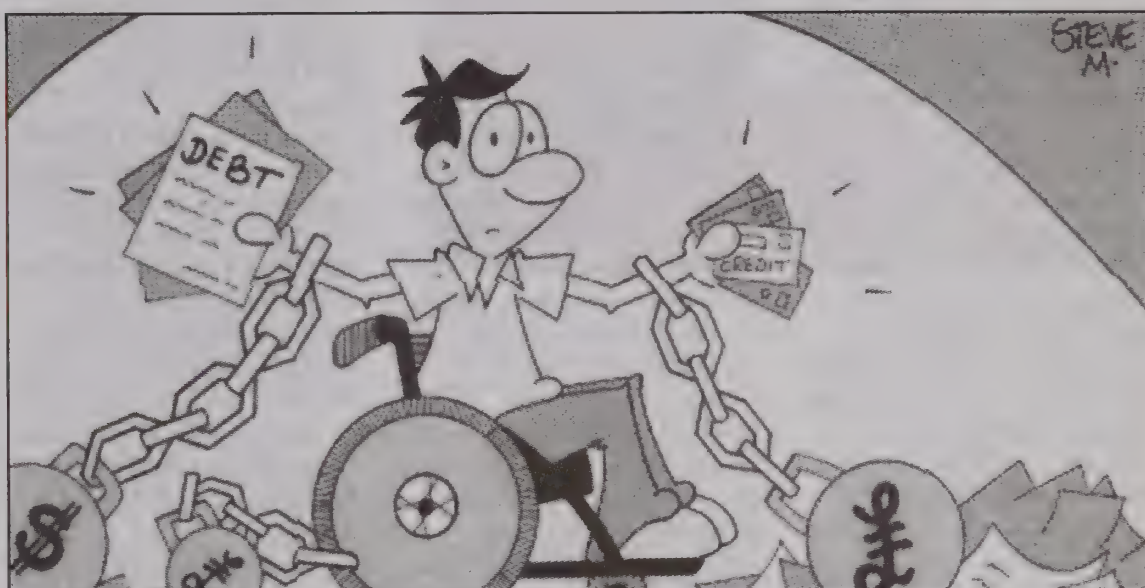
I still have credit cards, but I budget for things that, for convenience, I need to pay for by plastic. Budgeting helps you to see where you can economise.

Recording how you are spending your disposable income means you can start to ask yourself: "Did I really need to spend that?"

Then you are well on the way to getting control of your finances.

National Debtline,
tel: 0645-500 511.

Citizens' Advice Bureau
Service, tel: 0171-833 2181.



"But I thought credit cards were supposed to be liberating!"

Quick tips for dealing with debt

- Prioritise your debts - paying the mortgage, for example, keeps the roof over your head
- Look at ways of increasing your income - is your tax code right? Are you claiming all your benefits?
- Speak to your creditors as soon as possible
- Get advice promptly

transferred to other cards. Now the "convenience cheque" from the credit card company makes it even easier to spend or shuffle your card balances around.

For years I always had outstanding card balances. Other cards matched my existing credit limits and provided more competitive annual percentage rates (APRs) for transferring my outstanding balances.

But when I sold my flat and temporarily rented, serious debt set in. I used those convenience cheques to pay the deposit, the legal fees and the removal expenses. When I bought a property, I accumulated more of the same expenses.

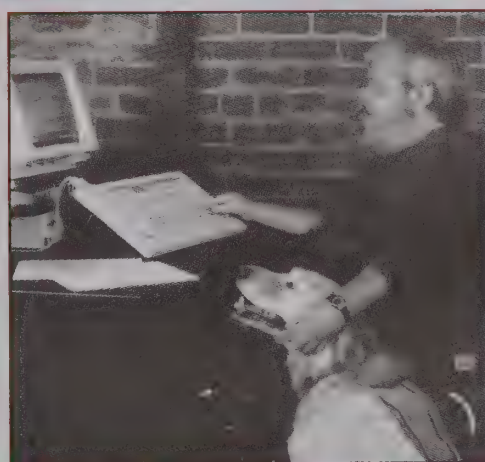
I got a real shock after consolidating all my balances to one card. The first statement I received was over £6,000. The minimum payment was approximately £300. A minimum payment only keeps the account in status quo; it doesn't reduce the outstanding

be passed to the recovery section and the interest frozen. That means you will be repaying the debt, not merely interest.

The card supplier will ask for a breakdown of your income and expenditure. Most people find it helpful to consult their local Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) and National Debtline. They can help you draw up a realistic budget for essentials such as, say, food, laundry, petrol and car maintenance. Then you can state clearly: "My offer to you is £X per month. I have obtained advice on this from CAB." If you have additional expenditure for food or laundry, explain why when you write to the creditor.

Before your offer of payment is accepted, you must pay, and keep paying, that amount. Effectively, that says: "I am trying to pay." You will continue to receive statements until your offer of payment is accepted, with pseudo-polite

What's in *DN* next month?



PARTY CONFERENCES

DN finds out who's offering what to disabled people.

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION WINNERS

Who had the strongest images of disability?

DESIGN SPECIAL

Inclusion is the buzz word - how will disabled people gain?

MICROTECH

Dr Janet Larcher reports on the latest developments.

Plus the best news, views, jobs and offers. On sale 27 October.

NEWSAGENT ORDER FORM

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Please reserve me a regular copy of *Disability Now* until further notice

Please deliver a copy of *Disability Now* to my home address

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To the newsagent: *Disability Now*, ISSN 0958-4676, is published monthly by Scope, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW. It is distributed by MMC Ltd, Octagon House, White Hart Meadows, Ripley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6HR.
Tel: +44 (0)1483 211222, fax: +44 (0)1483 224541.

Race against time

As potential Paralympians prepare for Sydney 2000, Rod Hermeston checks out how it's all going

With exactly one year to go until the big games in Sydney, Paralympic fever is hotting up. Britain is planning to send 250 competitors to the games, with all team members to be selected by the end of June, and the British Paralympic Association (BPA) has been given over £1m by the National Lottery and Government to cover the games and preparation for them.

It is all a far cry from the last Paralympics in Atlanta in 1996, when the BPA returned almost bankrupt having been forced to rely on sponsorship.

This time nearly two-thirds of British Paralympic squads have got, or will soon be getting, World Class Performance (WCP) money from the National Lottery – on top of the £1m. The money is designed to support elite sport and can be spent on equipment, training and living costs. More Paralympic squads now get WCP money than Olympic squads and individual athletes can get up to £20,000.

BPA sports technical director David Tillotson believes the funding has improved squad performances.



Listen up: vision scientist Gail Stephenson with squad members

"The process they've been forced into to try to get money has made selection tighter and standards higher," he says.

The squads and the BPA now have to produce results in return for the money. Tillotson says it might be possible to top the medal table by focusing on fewer competitors, the ones who look sure to get medals. The Sydney organisers are limiting numbers anyway, he says. But he stresses that even if squads did get smaller, it would still be worth sending young athletes who are hopes for the future if not medal contenders this time round.

Training for Paralympians has also changed a lot in recent years and new ideas are emerging.

Take for instance a weekend of training held in September at Loughborough University, where squads from sports including football, goalball and volleyball trained together because footwork is common to all of them, as well as doing their own team training.

The weekend was organised by the BPA and the Institute of Youth Sport and included 115 athletes.

The squads got their first taste of visual performance training courtesy of sports



In motion: Mark Sheppard instructs on the nature of movement

vision scientist Gail Stephenson, who also works with Manchester United football club.

Ms Stephenson claims to be able to help sportsmen and women become more aware of what is around them. Her exercises can also help combat eye fatigue. She believes her training will help increase the visual performance of disabled athletes, including those with a visual impairment.

"People do not use their visual system to their full potential anymore," said Ms Stephenson, "because we do not hunt or do lots of things our ancestors would have done."

The training weekend also featured advice from movement expert Mark Sheppard. He

says: "If people understand the nature of movement and balance and how they support themselves, they can use this to underpin their performance and technique."

There are also opportunities for British athletes to train in Australia before the Paralympics. The British Paralympic team has a training camp on the Gold Coast and some members are attending the Southern Cross Games in Sydney this month to get a feel for competing down under.

It seems Britain's Paralympians are finally getting the support they have lacked. But with money comes responsibility – and more demand for success. Let's hope they rise to the occasion!

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The prospects

Some of our big hopes for Sydney 2000



• Powerlifter Emma Brown, 20, of Pontypridd, holds the world record in her weight category. At the moment, she is training with weights and doing fitness exercises five times a week.

She says: "I've been doing well so far in most of the major championships because I've been able to break my own world records. I aim to peak next year."

• It's business as usual for Simon Jackson, who has been visually impaired Paralympic judo champion three times.

Jackson, 27, who is unbeaten in 139 fights, is optimistic that he will qualify for the games in October. Training includes work with two Olympics competitors.

"I train on average five hours a day, six days a week. I now get World Class Performance money. It is recognition of how well I have done and it is paying for training."

• Swimmer Maggi McEleny, 34, won gold at the last Paralympics.

She says: "I've decided to concentrate on the 50-metre breast stroke and 150-metre individual medley as I'm ranked number one in the world in both. I've been out to the Gold Coast twice and the facilities at the training camp are excellent."



• Wheelchair sprinter David Holding, 31, of Kettering, who took gold in the 100 metres in Atlanta, will take part in the Southern Cross Games in Sydney this month. (See DN December for report and pictures.)

"It's exactly a year before the Paralympics, so I will know what the temperature will be like at that time of year," he says.

PICTURES COURTESY OF DAWSON STRANGE/GRAHAM BOOL PHOTOGRAPHY

Capital Ad Drives DDA Campaign

With new DDA laws coming into force this month, Scope's latest ad campaign hits out with a rebellious parody highlighting access problems in London. Louise Cunningham reports.

Jim Potter is currently splashed all over London. This is what he gets for being 'the face' of Scope's new hard-hitting advertising campaign launched in September.

Thirty-year-old Jim is not a London resident but would prefer it to Milton Keynes where he has lived for the last four years. "I would like to live in London, but it is even less accessible for disabled people than everywhere else."

The very purpose of the 'Left Out' advertisement Jim features in is to raise awareness about the issue of disabled access and encourage disabled people across the country to take part in an access audit of customer services. Severely disabled and a wheelchair user, Jim currently lives in his own flat with support, but is hoping he can soon move into a nearby bungalow.

His appearance in the advertisement effectively makes him the face of the UK's young physically disabled population, frequently barred from a social life that other young non-disabled people have access to.

Jim has more than enough experience of this himself. An avid fan of the cinema and clubs, he has often been refused entry from London nightspots.

"It's really frustrating when I get as far as the door and then get turned away because I'm disabled. Disabled people ought to have the same rights as able bodied people but we don't. Access for disabled people is getting better but there is still a long way to go," he said.

The Advertisement

The advertisement itself has a bold, almost rebellious, approach to the issue of disabled access – an approach some might see as unusual for an organisation of Scope's age and size.

When the initial concept was being developed by Scope's advertising agency, D'Arcy (formerly DMB&B) almost two years ago, it "created a bit of a stir" in the office.

Copywriter Jonny Pittard said the challenge was to come up with an advertisement that accurately reflected the problem of access for disabled

people. The concept of creating a spoof of the biggest selling listings magazine in London, Time Out, just stuck out as the right choice.

"It all seems so obvious in hindsight. The whole point being that disabled people can't get into the places listed in magazines like Time Out."

The unusual idea of taking a well-known cover of a magazine and inverting it, combined with simple striking graphics and strong colours has resulted in an original and hard-hitting advertisement.

"This is necessary because the message we were trying to get across is irrefutable and urgent," said Art Director Steve Wakelam.

The campaign has the support of Time Out magazine, which has championed the rights of disabled people in past issues. It's scheduled to appear in the inside back cover of Time Out for a fortnight.

'Left Out' runs for a concentrated four week period from the end of September into October in London Underground stations, billboards and print media across the capital.

D'Arcy trust the effect of 'Left Out' will continue long after it has finished being published. "We hope that when people look at a Time Out cover in the future, they will be reminded of 'Left Out' and how restricted disabled people's lives can be without proper access," said Mr Wakelam.

Scope's Head of Public Relations James Rye is delighted with the advertisement.



"Well done to Time Out magazine for allowing their well-known house style to be adapted to make the point so effectively – and for aligning themselves with the campaign.

"The advertisement is bold and challenging and highlights the barriers that confront disabled people everyday. It's been waiting in the wings for a little while but now is the ideal time to use it. The concept sits brilliantly with our campaigning colleagues' efforts to highlight access problems and encourage the public to get involved in Scope's important Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) survey," said Mr Rye.

Access survey

Through the advertisement Scope hopes to encourage people across the country to take part in its nation-wide survey of pubs, clubs, shops, restaurants, and any public place used by consumers. The body of knowledge gleaned from the survey will be invaluable in

Scope's ongoing campaign for better access for disabled people.

The survey has been timed to coincide with part III of the DDA that came into force on October 1. Scope will target the country's business and public services with the survey results. It will urge them to take a realistic look at how they can make the necessary changes required by the DDA to ensure their facilities are open to everyone.

Scope Campaigns Officer James Ford encouraged people to take part in the campaign by completing a survey form. "Scope wants to hear from you about your experiences on the High Street and hear about occurrences of good and bad practice as you come about them.

"These findings will be used to campaign for comprehensive, enforceable civil rights for disabled people," said Mr Ford.

Survey packs are available from Scope on Tel: 0800 026 216

Scope National Conference & All Round Ability Exhibition '99 4-6 November 1999 Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool

Working Together to Remove the Barriers

Disabled people, parents, carers and professionals explore underlying issues in the move towards an inclusive society.

**Contact: Scope Conference,
6 Market Road, London N7 9PW
Conference Hotline: 020 7619 7373
Email: conference@scope.org.uk**

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The Guardian

Make the most of your skills by helping others to do the same Personal Development Training Co-ordinator c. £20,000 pa inclusive, Kent

You'll develop and promote "Personal Development" training packages for disabled people, working with them to identify their own needs. At the same time, you'll train members of local community groups to run their own courses, particularly targeting those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Experience of working with disabled people is essential, together with the ability to analyse training needs, produce materials and facilitate training groups in a multi-cultural environment.

This post is funded by a National Lottery Grant for three years.

For an application form
Tel 020 7619 7123
Fax 020 7619 7194
Minicom 020 7619 7163

Deadline for applications
22nd October 1999


SCOPE
FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

Bright ideas


From under a pile of information on new gadgets, Dan Batten surfaces to tell us about some of the best




Carry the can: the Canrac means an end to kitchen cupboard chaos


 Reaching for an elusive can at the back of the cupboard can be a serious pain, especially if it falls and hits you on the head! Using the new Canrac could take away the clutter from your kitchen cupboards and make life a lot easier and safer. It is just a frame of open tubes which sit on runners. You can load a maximum of 48 cans weighing up to 420g in multiples of four per tube. Then you pull the front of a tube towards you to get at the

can of your choice. A label slot at the front of each tube means you can differentiate your peas from your peaches at a glance. £29.95, including p&p. Canrac, Freepost SCO1124, Rothesay PA20 0BR.

 Still in the kitchen, the RNIB has just published a booklet called *Kitchen Sense*. It contains details of products to make the kitchen safer for blind and visually impaired people. Among the wealth of goodies


on offer are coloured chopping boards – ideal for food hygiene – and a large display clock, so you can check that your mouth-watering masterpiece doesn't turn into a dog's breakfast. 50p, tel: 0345-456 457.


 If you have problems reading and writing but have a Pulitzer Prize novel just bursting to get out, Words Worldwide may have the answer. Their new Keystone 99 software uses DragonDictate voice recognition, but, unlike conventional voice-activated software, your text can be read back to you to check accuracy. The software is especially useful for visually impaired or blind people, as it can be used without a monitor or keyboard. £250 from Words Worldwide, tel: (01661) 860999.

 Need a sling to get in and out of your wheelchair? Silvalea Textiles can make you a custom-built one, using material tested to bear weights up to 650kg, in just seven to ten days. Silvalea's team of experts can come out to you to measure up if necessary. The slings also have the option of removable carry straps, making it much less likely that you'll trip everyone up around you – the spoilsports! Hoist that phone to your ear and give the Silvalea helpline a call. £180, tel: (01626) 331655.



All dressed up: no fiddly fasteners from Dressing Made Easy

 Dressing Made Easy is the name of a new company launched at the recent Independent Living Show. It specialises in made-to-measure clothes for people who have difficulty with conventional fasteners. There is a wide range of garments, including suits, dresses and nightdresses made from drip-dry fabrics. You can also choose from a number of fastenings, including Velcro and complete front openings. Most items cost between £30 and £70. For a brochure, contact Sarah Satchwell, tel: (01564) 792059.

 The Department of Health has published some research on equipment for disabled people. The report gives advances made

in a wide area of disability aids. It will also point you in the right direction if you're a genius who needs backing to make a bright idea come to life. *Research and Development Work on Equipment for Disabled People*, £12, Department of Health, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH, tel: 0171-972 2000.



Made-to-measure: Silvalea slings are custom-built

Disability Now cannot guarantee the quality, availability or price of any of the products described in the Checkout column.

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The Bambach Saddle Seat was designed by occupational therapist Mary Gale, whilst working with children with Cerebral Palsy.

Mary found that children who previously could only sit in a wheelchair, could sit on horseback unsupported. The Saddle Seat was developed from that therapy.

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BaKare

A novel giveaway

You can't beat a good book, as the saying goes. But how often do you get the chance to sit down and read one?

So here's the answer: books on cassette, and DN has been given these 10 by WHSmith (costing £9-£15): *The Beach* by



Alex Garland, *Middlemarch* by George Eliot, *Intimacy* by Hanif Kureishi, *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë, *A Long Finish* by Michael Dibdin, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy, *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* by PD James, *The Marketmaker* by Michael Ridpath and *The Soldier's Return* by Melvyn Bragg.

All the texts have been recorded by well known actors such as Juliet Stevenson and Steven Mackintosh.

Terms and conditions

- Send your name and address on a postcard marked WHSmith, Talk Back or Mystery to DN, address on page 2
- Closing date: 29 October
- Entrants must be over 18
- UK entrants only
- No cash alternatives
- DN reserves the right to use winners for publicity
- Editor's decision is final
- Not open to DN staff/associates

Murder! Before or after dinner?

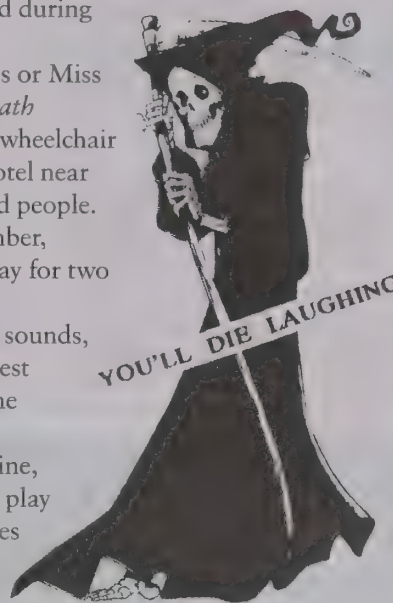
Sinister happenings are expected during November in Norfolk!

For a budding Sherlock Holmes or Miss Marple, there's a *Dinner with Death Murder Mystery*. It will be at the wheelchair accessible Ashwellthorpe Hall Hotel near Norwich, which is run by disabled people.

DN has a weekend (5-7 November, Friday dinner to Sunday lunch) stay for two people up for grabs, worth £214.

The *Dinner with Death* is as it sounds, although not literally! When a guest dies at dinner, some diners become suspects, others detectives.

The suspects are given a storyline, character and props to help them play the part. There are even spot prizes awarded for the best performer – so get ready to throw yourself



WYMONDHAM PHOTOGRAPHIC

into it. If all this sounds daunting, don't worry, as Peter Langridge will oversee the evening and give advice on how to investigate the crime.

To stay at Ashwellthorpe Hall Hotel, or for its full access details (not entries to this offer), tel: (01508) 489324, fax: (01508) 488409.

Do answer back

Anyone using a computer will have wished it could talk in plain English; certainly DN staff have. Well here's some software that will do just that.

Talk Back 95 costs £46 (inc. VAT) and we have five copies to give away. To use, highlight text, copy it to Talk Back using Copy from the Edit menu, and listen to it being spoken. It has standard play, pause, stop, program and eject buttons.

The programme is ideal for trying out presentations,

listening to e-mails and resting your eyes from screen strain. It also has advantages for children and adults with reading or speech problems.

You need a PC with at least Windows 95 and a standard sound card. Talk Back has options such as female or male voice, different voice emotions, pitch, volume and speed.

Non-winners can order a copy of the new Talk Back 2000 with extra options, at the reduced price of £45 (inc VAT, normally



£69) direct from Talking Technologies, tel: 0171-602 4107, fax: 0171-603 2109.

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DN10/99

• What's on

Disabled Living will hold an open day, *Your questions and concerns – do we have the answer?*, 13 October, Manchester. An opportunity to meet support agencies/advisory groups to discuss continence, advocacy, handling and moving, and more. To book your free place, tel: 0161-832 3678, fax: 0161-835 3591.

Sheffield Hallam University will host the conference *Public health in primary care...mission or mirage?*, 30 October. Aimed at those concerned about health inequalities, and focusing on topical issues, it will be opened by Stephen Hesford MP, Secretary to the All Party Group on Primary Care and Public Health. Call Julie Smith, tel: 0114-225 5336, fax: 0114-225 5337.

The Institute of Family Therapy will hold a one-day training event, *Disability, the family and the wider networks*, 1 November, London. Using different theories, it will look at the challenges facing individuals and their families. For cost and details, tel: 0171-391 9150, fax: 0171-391 9169.

emPOWER, the disability consortium, will hold a conference on orthotics, 8 November, London. It will discuss the report of a working party of the British Society of Rehabilitation Medicine, along with interaction between professional staff and users, standards of care, and research and development. For full details, tel: 0181-788 9464, fax: 0181-788 3444.

• Information

Accessible Holiday Accommodation and Attractions
Scarborough, Filey and the Surrounding Areas



Scarborough and District Disablement Action Group have published *Accessible Holiday Accommodation and Attractions*, covering Scarborough, Filey and the surrounding area. This clear, concise guide gives details on access, phones, guide dogs, large print brochure availability and much more. The guide is free, but p&tp £1. For a copy, tel: (01723) 379397.

St George's Hospital Medical School has produced two new videos to train carers in "lifting a fallen but injured person correctly". Contact Phil Harvey, Supervisor, Educational AV Unit, Academic Services, St George's Hospital Medical School, Cranmer Terrace, London SW17 0RE.

A new report, *Working with employers – disability on the agenda*, has been written in conjunction with British projects working with employers to raise their awareness of disability employment issues. The projects are part funded by the European Social Fund, and this evaluation aims to inform policy, instigate good practice, and make recommendations for the future. For a copy, tel: 0121-616 3660, fax: 0121-616 3680.

Change, the charity for people with learning disabilities, has produced a Picture Bank CDROM and pack containing drawings on topics such as health, social services and emotions. £60 for disability groups, £120 all others. For computer specification requirements, and orders, speak to Jean Sapsford, tel: 0171-490 2668, minicom: 0171-490 3483.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS
ACROSS: 1. Reindeer 7. Tart 8. Sedan chair 9. Inlay 10. Reason 12. Never 15. Cot 16. Anarchic 18. Revelation 22. Real 23. Ganyমেদে
DOWN: 1. Respite care 2. Indolent 3. Dandy 4. Ether 5. Car 6. Atlantic 7. Titanic 11. Yen 13. Valley 14. Rattle 17. Hone 19. Ore 20. Ale

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Ideal for disposing of light convenience products and used and tested by young and old alike, the ConSeal fits in neatly in bathroom or bedroom.

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ConSeal is available from selected large  and independent pharmacies.

Please send me, without obligation a free colour leaflet about ConSeal by Sengenics, plus details of how to order:

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Return to: Sengenics Marketing Dept, Jackel International Ltd, FREEPOST, Dudley Lane, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 7RH.

DN10/99



By DN's astrologer
Marion Stanton

LIBRA (24 Sept-23 Oct)
This is a good time to make major changes as long as you have done your groundwork. You have the confidence and you have the energy. Just be sure you have the support. Try to make major changes early in the month.

SCORPIO (24 Oct-22 Nov)
As a sudden surprise you may suddenly acquire the "gift of the gab", so you could talk yourself out of, or into, anything at the moment. You will even have the support of loved ones.

SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov-21 Dec)
Tread carefully in October. Your nearest and dearest will not see things in the same light as you. Your unusual ideas might pay off, but don't rely on luck. You need some unusually careful planning.

APRICORN (22 Dec-20 Jan)
While you're insecure this month, others believe in you. Your plans will get a lot of support. Trust others for once - they might be able to see the wood that your trees are masking.

AQUARIUS (21 Jan-19 Feb)
Stress and strain in your relationships could cloud your thinking at home and work. You believe in your ideas, but someone close may oppose them. Try to challenge them. Listen to them, but do what is best for you.

PISCES (20 Feb-20 March)
It's not a good month for romance. You may feel restricted on all sides. Get your thinking cap on and plan for the future. The plans you are making need firm foundations so tread with caution.

ARIES (21 Mar-20 Apr)
Your usually high self-esteem will get knocked back by someone this month. Try to concentrate on the little things in life and leave the big picture until you feel surer of your ground.

TAURUS (21 Apr-21 May)
If you feel argumentative in October don't take it out on loved ones. You could be heading for a big showdown around the 24th when the full moon occurs in your sign. While a close friend is on your side, others may resent you for

Candid Dan



Dan Batten takes to the streets to become the next Quentin Tarantino

Recently I've felt like one half of a married couple, though, sadly, the other half is painfully masculine: beard-clad and answers to the name of Ian Wright.

We have been drafted in to help our pal Winston on his first no-budget short, *Crooked Streets*, a tale where things are never as obvious as they seem. Filming in a back street, with graffiti and burnt out cars, coupled with lying on my back, boom mic in hand, buses roaring a foot behind my head confirmed my lack of sanity.

When not lying in the gutter, I became "The Lost Rolo" in front of the camera. Mr Rolo crops up everywhere, looking bemused and being a nuisance. Me to a T, apparently. My contribution was said to be stunning. I couldn't possibly argue with such fine judgement.

Nor could I fault my fellow actors. Ian, in his first performance, was convincing as music video producer, Danny Peach, but an Oscar may not beckon just yet.

With "Da streets" in the can, London's answers to Tarantino are hatching another masterpiece. We may even have a budget...if the home-made printing press can finally be got to work.

ACROSS

1. Santa's horsepower (8)
7. Type of pastry (4)
8. Old-fashioned mobility aid (5,5)
9. Decoration, eg of wood (5)
10. Logical thought (6)
12. At no time (5)
15. Baby bed (3)
16. Car chain (anag, 8)
18. Book of the Bible (10)
21. & 22. down. A proper drink (4,3)
22. Mythical river (8)

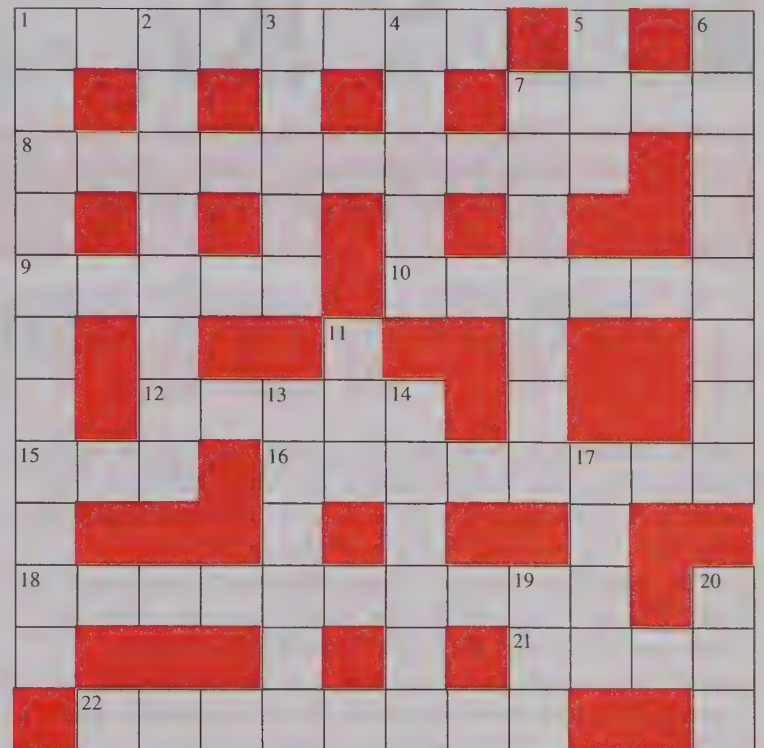
DOWN

1. Time out for enablers (7,4)
2. Tend lion (anag, 8)
3. Showily dressed man (5)
4. The atmosphere (5)
5. A Fiat or Ford, for perhaps (3)
6. Name of ocean (8)
7. Massive (7)
11. Longing (3)
13. Dip in the landscape (6)
14. Baby's toy (6)
17. Polish finely (4)
19. Metal-bearing rock (3)
20. See 22 across

Crossword sponsored by

Creating opportunities with disabled people

LEONARD CHESHIRE



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COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS

Answers on page 32

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DN9/99

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51-100 copies £225, 101-150 copies £250.



Dear Ann

Who better to help you? Ann Darnbrough is director of the National Information Forum and co-author of the Directory for Disabled People and other guides. Write to her at Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW or e-mail editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

He's out of control

My son Stuart is 11 years old and is getting out of control. He has hemiplegia and bad behavioural difficulties. All the troubles come at the weekends when I have to do chores; I work full-time and don't have time to do housework during the week.

Last Saturday, he ran away from the friends I had left him with. The police picked him up at a train station some distance away. Recently, when I left him with my husband to go to church, Stuart took the key and went out. He scratched an expensive car parked near our house. He has a terrible temper and has broken a lot of things in the house.

Is there anybody I can get to help me? I can't cope any longer.

Rosemary, London

It isn't surprising you can't cope and it is important that your doctor and others providing local services know this. They work on priorities and you need to ensure that you are at the top of their concerns.

Talk frankly to your doctor. Then you need to contact social services, who should arrange for a social worker to help you. You could ask to be put in touch with the Community and Adolescent Mental Health Service in your area or whatever the appropriate service is – your GP will know.

There are two organisations you may find it helpful to contact for advice and understanding: the ADHD (attention deficit hyperactive disorder) Parent Support Group UK and the Parent Information Service at Young Minds.

You are not alone, and it is perfectly okay to admit you can't cope. Please let me know how you get on.

- love and loneliness
- bereavement
- personal problems
- advice and support

to inspire you. In the meantime, visit the library and find out about the many clubs and organisations you could join locally. Your carers could organise this to give them something else to do.

Good luck!

Painful times

I'm desperately embarrassed. I have serious pain in my vulval/genital area and my GP doesn't seem to want to know. I suspect he thinks I'm making up my symptoms.

I don't think my husband understands either and it's difficult to talk about it.

I have chronic soreness, burning and irritation in this area of my body. Having limited mobility seems to make it worse as I sit in the same position for long periods. What can I do?

Jean, Doncaster

The causes of vulval pain syndrome remain elusive and this makes treatment difficult. Women are often told that their symptoms are due to thrush or that they have psychological problems. What a cop-out!

I think you will be helped by contacting the Vulval Pain Society. They have a quarterly newsletter which provides information on the diagnosis of different types of vulval pain syndromes, possible causes of vulval pain and treatments. The newsletter includes letters from members who want to share their experiences to help overcome the isolation associated with the condition.

Exercise advice

My son, who is in his forties and has multiple sclerosis (MS), has a weight problem and seems unable to lose any of the pounds. Being a wheelchair user, he does not get much exercise. Can you advise?

Sophy, Glasgow

The MS Society has guidelines for a balanced diet in its *MS and Healthy Eating* publication. If you want to know more, try the leaflet *MS Research in Nutritional Science*. Your son could ask his doctor if he could be referred to a dietitian. He could also ask where he could go to get advice on exercise.

All too often people with MS are told not to overdo it because of the fear of fatigue. I understand there is no real basis for this fear if the exercises are carefully planned.

ADHD Parent Support Group UK, 1A High Street, Dilton Marsh, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 4DL, tel: (01380) 726710 or (01373) 826045.

Parent Information Service, Young Minds, 102-108 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1M 5SA, tel: 0800-018 2138, Mon and Wed 10am-1pm, and Tues and Thurs 1pm-4pm.

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities, Chapter House, 18-20 Crucifix Lane, London SE1 3JW, tel: 0800-328 5050, Mon-Fri 1.30pm-4.30pm.

Vulval Pain Society, PO Box 514, Slough, Berkshire SL1 2PE

MS Society, 25 Effie Road, London SW6 1EE, tel: 0171-610 7171.

A UNIQUE SERVICE!

DN's telephone counsellor Lin Berwick can give disabled people and carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Disabled herself, Lin is a psycho-therapeutic counsellor and Methodist local preacher, and has a postgraduate diploma in homeopathic medicine. Talk to her on (01787) 882111 on Mondays 6pm-10pm and Thursdays 1pm-5pm.

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Our experienced team of lawyers include David Ruebain and Joanna Owen, who are themselves disabled and involved in the Disability Rights Movement, and Douglas Silas, a fluent British Sign Language user, who works with the Deaf community.

We are located in Wood Green in North London but also have offices in Camden, Stratford and Birmingham. We undertake Legal Aid work as well as private cases.

For free initial and confidential advice contact us at: David Levene & Co Solicitors, Ashley House, 235-239 High Road, Wood Green, London N22 8HF. Telephone: 0181-881 7777, Fax: 0181-889 6395, Minicom: 0181-881 6764, E-mail: info@davidlevene.co.uk

Stop Press

News about the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) coming into force in October 1999

A new handbook – Notes on the Disability Discrimination Act as at May 1999 – written by David Ruebain is essential reading for organisations committed to promoting good practice under the Act. Includes sections on the impact and interpretation of the Act to date and guidance on the new regulations. For your copy please send a cheque/postal order for £10, payable to David Levene & Co to the address below. Contact David Ruebain if your organisation would like training on the DDA.

Change one line in your will ...and you could change her future.

Every six hours we at Scope are reminded of just how desperately our work is needed.

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So please, would you consider adding a line to your will to help change the future for a disabled person? For our free guide to leaving a legacy, and any further information or advice, simply call **0171 619 7334** or return the coupon today. Thank you so much.

Yes, I want to make a difference for disabled people

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Please specify _____

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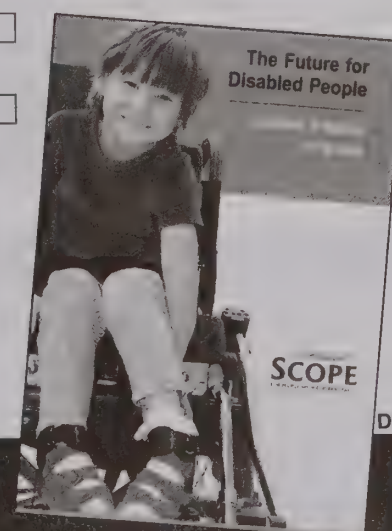
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I have made a will: Yes ☐ No ☐

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• Recruitment (also on pages 38 & 39)

WORKING TO REMOVE BARRIERS
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**Chief
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Disability Solutions is a North Staffordshire based
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 of services to the local community.

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 of disabled people to take our development forward.

The successful applicant will have:

- excellent skills in leading and managing a strong team of staff and volunteers.
- experience in financial and project management
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- an understanding of the voluntary and statutory local government and health sectors.

Application packs in print, large print, tape or disc
 are available from: Disability Solutions, Dudson
 Centre, Hope St. Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 5DD.
 Tel: (01782) 683113, text: (01782) 683111,
 fax: (01782) 683120.

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For further information contact Jeff Love, tel:
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Closing date for applications is 18 October 1999.

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 tel: 0171-619 7336,
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• Courses

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 contact DLF training on

0171-289 6111

Minicom: 0171-432 8009

Fax: 0171-266 2922

E-mail: dlfinfo@dlf.org.uk

Disabled Artist?

**Do you want to enhance your career possibilities by
 learning the skills and expertise to work as an arts
 workshop leader?**

Leading the Way is a specially designed higher education training
 course for disabled artists who would like to train as arts
 workshop leaders. The course is run by a partnership between the North West
 Disability Arts Forum (NWDAF) and the Liverpool Institute for the Performing Arts
 (LIPA) and it is accredited by Liverpool John Moores University.

The course is free, imbued with the social model of disability and specifically aimed at
 disabled artists of any art form, and a minority of non-disabled applicants will be
 considered. The **Leading the Way** course will run again from January to April 2000.
 The course will be taught over one full day a week for twelve weeks in Liverpool and all
 access requirements will be met. For example, we will pay for sign language
 interpreters, personal assistants and anything else you might need.

Further details, application forms and enquiries to: **Mickey Fellowes, North West Disability
 Arts Forum, 2a Franceys Street, Off Clarence Street, Liverpool L3 5YQ.**
 Tel/Minicom: 0151-707 1733, Fax: 0151-708 9355,
 E-mail: Mickey@nwdaf.mersinet.co.uk

Closing date for applications is 19 November.

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 This post completes the day-to-day management team of our information
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Successful applicants for all three posts will be knowledgeable about the law
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 experience of disability either as a disabled person or carer.

Salaries for all three posts will be on NJC Scale 4, points 18 to 21, £12,912
 to £14,391 (pro rata for the Assistant Co-ordinator post).

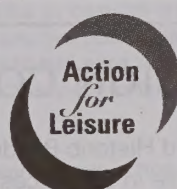
Disabled people are strongly encouraged to apply for these posts. Those
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DIAL Mansfield and District aspires to being an equal opportunities employer.
 Information packs and an application form are available from the DIAL office.



Closing date for applications:
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Dial is supported by Nottinghamshire County Council
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All members of the team will need to combine an understanding of,
 and interest in, disability issues with a commitment to consumer
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Further details of the post or posts you are interested in from: Judy
 Denziloe, Development Manager, Action for Leisure, Cambridge House,
 Cambridge Grove, London W6 0LE.
 Tel: 0181-741 4119, fax: 0181-741 4505

Please let us know if you have any particular needs.

Closing date for applications: 25 October 1999.

These posts are funded for 3 years by the National
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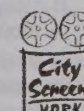
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• Recruitment (also on pages 37 & 39)

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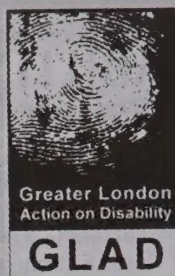
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Informal enquiries to: Colin Barnes, tel: 0113 233 4414 or Geof Mercer, tel: 0113 233 4413, fax: 0113 233 4415.

Application forms and further particulars may be obtained from Marie Ross, Department of Sociology and Social Policy, The University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, tel/minicom: 0113 233 4418. Job ref: 036-039-004-027. Closing date: 25 October 1999.

We welcome applications from all sections of the community, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, or disability. Textphone for deaf applicants only 0113 233 4353. All information is available in alternative formats - please contact 0113 233 5771.

Towards Equal Opportunities



CLOSES - 22/10/99

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Information is also available on audio tape, in Braille or on a floppy disk in rich text format.

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Salary: £22,436. This post is established for 3 years.

Greater London Action on Disability (GLAD) wish to appoint a disabled person to manage the delivery of a three-year programme of work to support the development of small disability organisations in London.

You must have experience of managing a small team of paid staff, experience of planning and delivering a programme of work to targets and meeting deadlines, a thorough knowledge of disability equality issues and equal opportunities, and a good general knowledge of the voluntary sector and funding opportunities in London. Some practical experience of fundraising and training is essential.

You must be able to work in a consultative way and be able to monitor and evaluate the progress of your team's work, including providing reports to the programme's committee.

This post and the programme are funded by the City Parochial Foundation. GLAD's offices are fully accessible.

This post is only open to disabled people. GLAD has an equal opportunities policy and will consider all applicants on their merits. Jobshare applications will be considered.

GLAD is a registered charity no. 293158, which through its work aims to improve opportunities for disabled people living or working in London. GLAD is an equal opportunities employer.

Southampton Centre for Independent Living



has a vacancy in **OUTREACH WORK**
with a **FOCUS on YOUNG DISABLED PEOPLE**
Salary £16,719 - £17,838



SCIL provides a range of support services to disabled people to enable them to live independent lives. We now have three year funding to increase our work in the most under-represented groups in our community. We seek an

OUTREACH AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT WORKER

to promote our services, primarily to young disabled people and generally to other disadvantaged groups.

You will be required to create a strong network of contacts with young disabled people and representative organisations, and in due course with other under-represented groups.

Applicants should have outreach or similar experience, ideally with young people, and be able to demonstrate a creative approach to developing promotional materials and techniques to access under-represented groups.

The project also involves the provision of training courses and volunteer work experience opportunities within SCIL, to develop the skills and confidence of disabled people. Training or volunteer management experience would be an advantage.

This post requires a thorough understanding of disability issues. Preference will be given to applicants who are disabled or have significant experience of disability issues based around the social model of disability.

SCIL is committed to the principle of equality of opportunity for all people. This post open to jobshare.

For an application pack contact: SCIL, 6 Northlands Road, Southampton, SO15 2L Tel: (01703) 330982, fax: (01703) 225060, minicom: (01703) 635167.

Closing date for return of applications is Friday 15 October 1999.

Headway Black Country



(Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton)



A registered charity and support group for people with acquired brain injury, their families and carers, covering the Black Country area, seeks to employ an experienced and enthusiastic person to a new post of

PROJECT MANAGER

Salary: £20,955pa, NJC scale SO2/PO pt 33, 37 hours pw.

The post is funded for three years by a National Lottery Charities Board grant. The main aims of the project are:
To develop the group and raise the profile of Headway Black Country, by making contacts and networking throughout the Black Country area.

To develop the infrastructure for a day service for people with acquired brain injury. This will include the identification of funding, maintenance of the service beyond three years and the co-ordination of recruiting volunteers.

Applicants must have a degree or equivalent professional qualification and/or previous experience of project management and development. They must also be able to demonstrate good communication skills, a commitment to equality and the needs of disabled people, knowledge or procedures and structure of statutory agencies and the ability to monitor and report on the project. Managing a working budget and supervising a clerical assistant will also be expected.

Car owner/driver essential.

Closing date: 5pm, 8 October

Interview date: 22 October

Application forms and job descriptions from:
Headway Black Country, Medway House, 98/99 Dixons Green Road, Dudley, West Midlands DY2 7DJ, tel: (01384) 869961.

Only applicants called for interview will be notified of the outcome.

Headway Black Country is a branch of Headway National Head Injuries Association, Registered Charity No. 1025852.



Opportunities to serve your community in the year 2000

Chair and Board Members for the National Health Service

Central to the management of the NHS are the boards that direct the activities of NHS trusts, Health Authorities and, from next April, Primary Care Trusts. The Secretary of State for Health is looking to appoint high calibre people with the necessary skills, commitment and user experience to serve as chairs or non-executive members of these boards.

These are senior positions of leadership in complex organisations with multi-million pound budgets and are demanding in terms of intellectual ability and personal skills. You will need to work closely with local hospitals, authorities and GPs and liaise with Regional Chairs and Government ministers.

You will need to demonstrate good judgement, analytical skills, sensitivity and a strong team working approach. As a chair you will need to show significant leadership skills. You should also have relevant business skills and/or experience from working within the community or voluntary organisations. All candidates are expected to live within the area served by the organisation.

Health Authorities

As a chair or board member you will help the board to assess the health needs of the local population; develop strategies for health improvement; work with partners to ensure services are delivered; and monitor the effective outcome of local Health Improvement Programmes.

To help deliver this challenging agenda we will need 46 Chairs and 210 new members by April 1st.

NHS Trusts

NHS trusts provide healthcare in our hospitals and the community.

As a chair or non-executive director you might serve on a board responsible for a specialist major teaching hospital, an ambulance service, mental health service or a local hospital. You would use your expertise and local knowledge to help the board face the challenge of providing an effective and high-quality service to patients.

We are looking to appoint 90 chairs and up to 550 non-executive directors by December next year.

Remuneration

Chairs are remunerated in the range £15,500 - £20,000 according to the size of the organisation for around 12 days work a month. Non-executive board members receive £5,140 for around 5 days work a month.

How to apply

If you think you have the skills we need, the time to spare and want to start the millennium by serving your local NHS, please call the Appointments Hotline on 0113 254 6452 during office hours Monday to Friday for an information pack. These vacancies only apply to NHS Boards in England.

Closing date for receipt of completed applications is 22nd October. Information packs are available in large type, or Braille, on request. Candidates who have been notified that their names are on our Regional Register will automatically be considered for all new appointments.

The Department of Health welcomes applications regardless of gender, race, disability or sexuality. A guaranteed interview scheme is available for disabled candidates who meet the minimum criteria for appointment. The Department is committed to the principle of public appointments based on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process. Political activity will not be a criterion for appointment but candidates must subscribe to the objectives of the NHS.

Primary Care Trusts (PCTs)

These new bodies will be set up after local consultation and will have unparalleled opportunities to improve and develop primary and community health services. With their own budget they will commission health services, invest in primary and community care and work to improve the health of their local population.

To drive forward this exciting local programme the Secretary of State will be looking to appoint a chair and 5 members to each body. It is expected that there will be a relatively small number of PCTs established in 2000/2001.

Where individuals are particularly interested in appointment to a PCT in their local area, they should first contact (through the 'appointments hotline' - see below) the Primary Care lead officer in the relevant NHS Executive Regional Office to establish whether an application to establish a PCT in their area has been proposed. All proposals to establish PCTs in 2000/2001 will need to have been notified to the relevant Regional Office by 30 September this year.

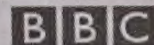
Expanding international company looking for people to work from home - full-time/part-time. Good earning potential. Call for further details on 0171 864 6524

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Our Managers only require the highest calibre of staff - if that's you and we find your ideal post by 1st November - we'll reward you with an extra £200 for the end of January. SWs all Client Groups URGENTLY REQUIRED. Committed to equal opportunities

Wanted



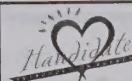
Science Department is celebrating the millennium with a series of documentaries about babies born in January 2000.

The project aims to follow a group of children born from all walks of life and from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds.

If you are expecting in January 2000 and would like to learn more about the programme, please call Ruth Drewett, tel: 0181-752 7055 or e-mail: ruth.drewett@bbc.co.uk

Charity working with disabled people urgently needs volunteers in its friendly head office. Help with travel expenses provided. Interested? Phone Helen Padake on 0171-452 2121

Personal



For disabled people - able bodied welcome

Tel: 01473 226950 Fax: 01473 254030

New era, new logo, 50 weddings on. To find out more about Handdate write, phone, fax or e-mail:

Freeport, Handdate, The Wellington Centre, 52 Chevallier Street, Ipswich IP1 2BR E-mail: handdate@btinternet.com A member of ABIA



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Conference

CONTROVERSIES IN CEREBRAL PALSY Post Graduate Medical Centre, Derriford Hospital, Plymouth Friday 5 November 1999

This annual multidisciplinary conference organised by the Special Families Trust aims to promote a wider understanding of cerebral palsy. Leading experts will be speaking on a range of topical and controversial subjects.

For further details write or ring Special Families Trust, Erme House, Station Road, Plympton, Plymouth, Devon PL7 3AU, tel: (01752) 346861.

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Independent Living Worker

1-year fixed term contract.

Salary scale SO1, £19,866pa (inc LW)

WfAD wish to appoint a disabled person as our Independent Living (Development) Worker.

You will have a thorough understanding of Independent Living and Direct Payment issues and experience of working with disabled people in a way that is empowering.

Closing date 22 October.

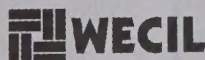
For an information pack please phone WfAD on 0181-509 0812 (voice and minicom).

Deadlines for the November issue of Disability Now:

Booking deadline is 8 October

Copy deadline is 12 October

WEST OF ENGLAND CENTRE FOR INTEGRATED LIVING



requires disabled people for the following posts:

Young Disabled People's Personal Assistance Project Worker

Salary: £18,546 - £19,770 (APT & C, pt. 29-31)

To work in a new, exciting and innovative project with young disabled people (14-16 yrs) who require personal assistance to access mainstream community activities.

Project Administrator

Part-time 17.5 hours pw

Salary: £14,766 - £16,194 (APT & C, pt. 22-25) pro rata

For further information please contact: Sarah Bryson, WECIL Ltd., Leinster Avenue, Knowle, Bristol BS4 1AR. Tel: 0117-983 9839.

WECIL particularly encourages applications from under-represented groups (eg black disabled people, disabled lesbians and gay men).

Closing date: 27 October 1999.

Artlink East is an Arts/Disability charity working to provide access to the Arts throughout Lincolnshire. We would like to hear from professional artists offering short workshops in all art forms, particularly those artists with personal experience of disability and who have a commitment to working in community arts.

Write, with a CV including details of workshop intentions/outcomes, costs etc, to Lee Sass, Artistic Director, Artlink East, The Guildhall Arts Centre, St Peter's Hill, Grantham, Lincs NG31 6PZ.

Disability Now

£1.60 October 1999

The campaigning newspaper that puts you in the picture

VAT price threat

Prices are set to rise if VAT is added to some products used by disabled people. See page 1.

Top stuff: Nine visually impaired young people, including Louise Waddington, 16 (second left) climbed Africa's largest mountain, Kilimanjaro, and raised money for Sightsavers International



SIGHTSAVERS INTERNATIONAL

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

Win
audio novels,
a murder
mystery
weekend & IT
software



WET, WET, WET
Dolphin therapy can help disabled kids p22



SONG BIRD
Visually-impaired singer's new LP p23

Jobs
pages 37-39
and on our
website

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